THE VNBELEEFE OF S. THOMAS THE APOSTLE, laid open for the comfort *of all that desire to* beleeue.

WITH A COMFORTABLE Treatise for all that are afflicted *in soule, or bodie, or* otherwise.

The first armeth vs against despaire in the houre of death: the second against *impatiencie vnder the* crosse.

By NICOLAS BOVVNDE Doctor *in Divinitie.*

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To the right Worſhipfull Sir ROBERT GARDENER Knight, and *to the vertuous Ladie* ANNE GARDENER his religious and louing *wife, their owne hearts deſire* in Chriſt.

RIght Worſhipfull Sir, though the kingdome of Ireland did bereaue this countrey of yours, of a great part of that good, which by a certain right it hoped for from you: by reaſon of your long ſeruice there vnder Queene Elizabeth *of bleſſed memorie, in the chiefeſt and moſt honourable ſeate of Iuſtice, by the ſpace of* 15. *or* 16. *yeares together: yet the benefite vnto both the Kingdomes was thought to be ſo great thereby, that the loſſe was ſo much the more eaſily borne.*

And now at the laſt this countrey doth willingly acknowledge, that it hath great

cause to thanke God not onely for your safe returne vnto it some yeares past, furnished with greater experience for gouernment; but also with hope of neuer departing frō them any more: sauing that in your last imployment, vnder his Highnes (whome God long preserue) into his Ilands of Iarsie and Garnesie, they were suspended frō that hope by the space of certaine moneths.

Which beeing faithfully performed and ended, their hope is renued, that you beeing now at the last, merito tuo maximo, donatus rude, may say of this country, Here is my rest. Which my selfe haue more speciall cause to desire in regard of my ministerie, which by your presence you haue often and long giuen great countenance vnto.

And you, good Madame, both since this happie ioyning of you both together, and long before, by your continuall comming to the publike assemblies, though a good way off; both winter and sommer; neuer hindered by the heate of the one, or the

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sold of the other, and that by the space of 20. yeares, haue giuen so good an example, like vnto those, that trauelled without wearisomnes through the vaile of Baca, with hope to appeare before God in Syon; that you haue incouraged many vnto the like paines, and haue left the slothfull without excuse. By which, & some other good examples like this, the credit of Gods word among vs hath in some tolerable sort beene hetherto vpheld. Psal. 84. 6, 7.

For which, and for many other great fauours from you both, I present these small fruits of my poore labours vnto you, as a perpetuall testimonie of my thankefulnes vnto you; and to God for you. Desiring him to multiplie his graces vpon you, and long to preserue you to your owne mutuall comfort, and the good of so many, as doe depend vpon you.

And the like blessing of God be vpon the good and forward hopes of the worshipfull M. William Spring your onely child; that his youth may be still so seaso-

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ned with religion and learning, that in time to come he may in the ſeate of Iuſtice for the good of his countrey, by his deſerts goe beyond all his progenitors: and ſo long vphold the credit of that right worſhipfull houſe. And ſo I moſt humbly take my leaue of you all. Norton in Suff. Iun. 24. 1608.

Your Worſhips in all reuerend and dutifull affection,

Nicolas Bownde.

THE VNBELEEFE OF S. *Thomas* the Apoſtle laid open, for the *comfort of all that deſire to beleeue*: which armeth vs againſt de-*ſpaire in the houre* of death.

Ioh. 20. 24. &c.

But Thomas one of the twelue, called Didymus, was not with them, when Ieſus came. 25 *The other Diſciples therefore ſaid vnto him, We haue ſeene the Lord: but he ſaid vnto them, Except I ſee in his hands the print of the nayles, and put my finger into the print of the nayles, and put mine hand into his ſide, I will not beleeue it.* 26 *And eight daies after again his Diſciples were within, and Thomas with them. Then came Ieſus, when the doores were ſhut, and ſtood in the middes, and ſaid, Peace be vnto you.* 27 *After he ſaid to Thomas, Put thy finger here, and ſee mine hands, and put forth thine hand, and put it into my ſide: and be not faithleſſe, but faith-*

full. 28 *Then Thomas answered, and saide vnto him, My Lord, and my God.* 29 *Iesus saide vnto him, Thomas, because thou hast seene me, thou beleeuest: blessed are they, that haue not seene, and haue beleeued.*

THis text of Scripture is appointed to be read for the Gospel vpon S. *Thomas* day, because it cõtaineth a memorable storie of him, whose blessed memorie we keepe vpon that day: to that end, that we might be thankful vnto God for him, and for the excellent gifts bestowed vpon him, and the great good done to the Church by his ministerie and preaching: and that we might labour to imitate his vertues, and to profit by his great infirmities: wherein consisteth the true and right obseruation of this, and all other such like daies.

And

And not in the worshipping of him, and praying to him, and setting vp candles before his image, and offering to him, as they did in the time of Poperie; when they praied vnto God to be heard at his intercession, and for his merits, and blood shedding; as they did vpon other such daies for the rest of the Apostles, and Saints. And they thought that the celebrating of those daies was a great honour and seruice acceptable vnto them, and they kept them to that ende, that they might become their patrons, and fare the better for their sakes before God: and they know no other vse of them vnto this day.

Wherein they offer great indignitie vnto Christ, first, in robbing and spoyling him of the honour and office of his mediation and intercession, to whom onely it belongeth: of whom the Apostle thus writeth: it is Christ which is dead, yea or rather

Rom.8.34. which is risen againe: who is also at the right hand of God,& maketh requeſt also for vs,and therefore who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods choſen? And Chriſt himſelf thus ſpeaketh of his owne office:

Ioh.14.13. Whatſoeuer ye ask in my name,that wil I doe,that the father may be glorified in the ſonne.

Secondly, they doe great wrong vnto him, in hallowing any daies to the honour of any, but of God alone. For all things that are ſanctified, are ſanctified to his honour and worſhip onely, who only is to be worſhipped & ſerued with diuine worſhip:therefore the bread and wine in the Sacrament of the Lords ſupper,and the water in Baptiſme, are ſanctified to the honour of Chriſt, and of none other: as thoſe that repreſent vnto vs the breaking of his bodie, and the ſhedding of his moſt pretious blood for the forgiuenes of our ſinnes. And

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ſo are and ought the Churches to be conſecrated to the name and honour of God alone (who onely is there to be ſerued) and not of any Saint, as in time paſt they haue beene.

And ſo ought the daies alſo: As vnder the law all the Sabbaths were conſecrated vnto the honour of God the creator of heauen and earth: and vnder the Goſpel vnto the honour of Chriſt the Redeemer of his Church: and all other daies, that are now put a part among vs from the common affaires of the world, they are ſanctified to that ende, that God might be honoured in them, and by them.

And therefore we put a great difference betweene theſe holy daies, and the Sabbath, or Lords day. Firſt of all in that we know this later to ſtand vpon a better foundation then they, as hauing his inſtitution from Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and ſo doth binde all nations, and is perpetuall,

neuer to be changed. Whereas the former haue their warrant only from men, and ſo doe not binde all Churches alike, and may be changed; yea taken cleane away: and ſerue onely for Chriſtian policie, and good order in the Church, that men vpon theſe daies might come together, and ſerue God. And therefore it is to be prouided, that there ſhould not be too many of them, leaſt thereby men ſhould be hindred from the neceſſarie workes of their callings; which hath mooued the reformed Churches, as in this Realme, ſo elſ-where, to cut off many that were vſed in the time of Poperie, and ſo to keepe thẽſelues in a mediocritie, neither hauing too many; nor putting downe all.

Secondly, there is a difference betweene them, in the manner of keeping the one, and the other: for on the Chriſtian Sabbath the lawes of

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our kingdome and Church doe reſtraine all men from many things, as from markets, and faires, and keeping of Aſſiſes and Seſſions for the execution of iuſtice: which they doe tolerate and permit vpon other holydaies. Whereas in the time of blindneſſe they ſometimes preferred theſe daies before the Sabbath; and had more ſolemne ſeruice and feaſts vpon them, and counted it a more deadly ſinne then to worke, then vpon the Sabbath day.

Beſides this, they appointing theſe daies to the honor of men, did thereby greatly diſhonour the Saints theſelues. For what greater diſhonour can there be vnto any man, then to make him a traytor? and to giue vnto him that honour, that is due onely to the Prince? And if any ſhould in ſimplicitie and good will aſcribe ſo much to the greateſt noble man in the Realme, that at the laſt he ſhould

giue him the titles that belong vnto the King, and ſo bring him into the ſuſpicion of treaſon againſt his will, it were no honour, but diſhonour vnto him: So the Papiſts in extolling the Saints ſo highly, that they conſecrate daies vnto them, and thereby ſeeke to honour them, and hope that therefore they will become Patrons vnto them: all which are proper vnto Chriſt; in ſo doing they diſhonour them: for they make them, as much as lieth in them, to be traytors vnto Chriſt, in robbing him of that honor that is proper vnto him.

And theſe Saints if they were now aliue vpon earth, would not onely not take this honor vnto themſelues, and thanke them for it, but altogether refuſe it, and rebuke them for it: as *Paul* and *Barnabas* did vnto the people at Lyſtra, when they brought buls with garlands, and would haue ſacrificed vnto them: They rent their

cloathes,

cloathes, and ranne in among them, Act. 14. 14.
saying, O men, why doe you these
things? we are men subiect vnto the
like passions, that you be: and preach
vnto you, that you should turne from
these vaine things vnto the liuing
God.

IN this text there are these foure things principally to be obserued: first of all the great infidelitie of S. *Thomas* the Apostle, who did not beleeue the resurrection of Christ, reported vnto him by all his fellow Apostles, who had seene him, v. 24, 25. Secondly, the great mercie of Christ, who did not cast him off, and leaue him to perish in this vnbeleefe of his, but most louingly in time conuenient sought to pull him out of it by all good meanes; euen the very same, which himselfe desired. vers. 26, 27. Thirdly, the increase of faith in *Thomas* by these meanes, appearing by the confession that he made, after that

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he was thus confirmed, namely, that he did beleeue, not onely that he was riſen againe, but for him, and therefore calleth him, his Lord, and his God. v. 28. Laſtly, here Chriſt vpon this occaſion deliuereth a generall doctrine, and ſo applieth this fact of *Thomas* vnto the whole church; euen that they ſhould be bleſſed, who ſhould beleeue in him, though they did not ſee him, as he had done.

I doe not purpoſe to intreat of all theſe, but onely of ſo much, as doth concerne the vnbeleefe of S. *Thomas*. But before I come to it, it may ſeeme ſomewhat ſtrange, that S. *Iohn* in his Goſpel doth write this of his fellow Apoſtle, ſeeing it tendeth ſo wholly to his diſcredit. The other Euangeliſts all of them haue left it out, it may ſeeme in fauour of him; and it might be thought, that it had beene better, if he had paſſed it ouer with ſilence alſo. But this Apoſtle liuing

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longer then all the reſt, about an hundred yeares after Chriſt, and ſo ſeeing all their writings, doth adde this, as a matter of ſpeciall moment: as indeede in it there is offered to the Church great inſtruction and conſolation.

And this plaine dealing of his is a note of that integritie, that is to be found in all the Scriptures, as beeing penned by the ſpirit of God. For they came not in old time, as *S. Peter* ſaith, by the will of man: but holy men of God did ſpeake and write, as they were mooued by the holy Ghoſt. And therefore they greatly differ frō the writings of men, which ſauour of the ſpirit of men; and ſo are in many things partiall: as this is a common fault in many Hiſtoriographers, that they flatter great men, and ſpeak onely of their vertues, which they ſet out to the full: but their vices either they wholly conceale, or lightly paſſe thē ouer; 2. Pet. 1. 21.

ouer; especially when they are their friends, and of the same ranke and order with them, as S. *Thomas* was vnto the Apostle S. *Iohn*. But it is not so in the Scriptures, which proceeding frō the spirit of truth, are no more partiall, then God himselfe, with whome
Rom.2.11. there is no respect of persons: in so much that the penners of them doe lay open the greatest sinnes of the greatest men in their time, euen of the Kings and of the Priests.

1.Sam.2. 28. As of *Heli*, how he honoured his children aboue God, and caused the sacrifices of the Lord to be despised, and troaden vnder foote: and of *Manasseh* king of Iudah, how he caused
2.Chr.33.6 his sonnes to passe through the fire in the valley of Ben-hinnom, and gaue himselfe to witchcraft, and to charming, and to sorcerie: and vsed them that had familiar spirits, and soothsayers: and did very much euill in the sight of the Lord, to anger him: yea,

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the Prophets do not ſpare them, that were neareſt in blood to them, or neareſt in any bond of affinitie, or friendſhip. For *Moſes* doth ſet out the murmuring of *Aaron* his owne naturall brother, and of his ſiſter *Miriam*, and how God did puniſh them for it: which he did not to defame them, or with a minde to be reuenged of them: for the Lord gaue this teſtimonie of him, that he was a very meeke man, aboue all the men that were vpon the earth. Num. 12. 2. verſ. 3.

And the Apoſtles doe write the truth boldly and ſincerely of their fellow Apoſtles, though their faults were exceeding great, and not the like almoſt heard of. As how *Iudas* did for thirtie pieces of ſiluer ſell and betray his Lord and maſter Chriſt into the hands of his moſt deadly enemies. And how *Peter* did not onely denie him once, but the ſecond time did forſweare him, yea did curſe and Matth. 26. 15 verſ. 70.

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banne himselfe, if that euer he did but know him.

And to conclude this point, their vprightnes in their writings appeareth so much the more, that they doe not spare thēselues, but publish their owne faults to the praise of God, as his spirit in them did direct them. For *Moses* declareth at large how slow & backward he was to take vpon him that calling, that God had appointed him vnto, and what excuses and delaies he made, in so much that the Exod. 4. 14 Lord was very angrie with him.

And *Dauid* writeth of the adulterie and murder, that he had secretly committed against Bath-sheba, and her husband Vriah: and confesseth openly, that he had deserued death for both of them, when he thus prayPsal. 51. 14. Middamim. eth, Deliuer me from bloods, O Lord. So likewise the Apostle *Paul* spareth not himselfe, because it was not he, but the spirit of God that spake in him,

him, in that he had perſecuted the Church of God cruelly, and waſted it. This kind of ſimple dealing is one argument not of the leaſt moment, among many other, to euince that the Scriptures are written by Gods ſpirit: and are therefore Canonicall, for they are not partiall: but the ſpirit of truth & ſimple dealing doth marueloufly appeare euery where in them. Gal. 1. 13.

But it may further be demanded, though ſuch things as theſe be written of the Saints, whether they ſhould be read openly in the Church vpon thoſe holy daies, that cary their name: as if, when we keepe the memorie of a man, all his euill deedes ſhould be reckoned vp, tending to his infamie and diſcredit. Concerning which, as the prouidence of God therein is to be acknowledged, who hath thus diſpoſed of it: ſo we are to reuerence and highly eſteeme the

the godly wiſdome of thoſe holy fathers, who did firſt appoint thoſe daies thus to be kept. For they did it to the honour of God, and therefore would by the reading of theſe texts of ſcripture haue all men know, what the Saints were of themſelues: and what infirmities, vnbeleefe, and other ſinnes they were ſubiect vnto; euen the ſame that we are: as Paul and Bar-
Act.14.14. nabas ſaide of themſelues, We are men ſubiect to the like paſſions, that you are: and as S. Iames ſaith of the
Iam.5.17. Prophet Elias, that he was a man ſubiect to the like paſſions, as we are. That ſo if they were any thing, we might know from whence it came, and ſo as Paul ſaith of himſelfe, I am
1.Cor.15. 10. the leaſt of the Apoſtles, which am not worthie to be called an Apoſtle, becauſe I perſecuted the Church of God: but by the grace of God, I am that I am: and his grace which is in me, was not in vaine: but I laboured

red more abundantly then they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which is with me. So we might say of them, beeing put in minde by the Scriptures that are read euen vpon those daies, wherein we keepe the greatest memorie of them, what they were of themselues, and what they were by the grace of God: and so not so much honour them, as praise God for them.

For the purpose of those ancient fathers of the Church, who apointed these daies thus to be kept, was not to set out the Saints themselues, that we might glory in them, and in their merits: but in the merits of Christ, & in the mercie of God shewed to the for his sake: and so not only to teach vs how rightly to esteem of them, but that in them, as in a glasse we might see, what we are subiect vnto: and yet how gratious God is to pore sinners, & so might take comfort in the mer-

cie of God ſhewed to them. As here what great vnbeeleefe was in Saint Thomas, and yet Chriſt did help him of it, and ſaued him? to ſhew vs, that we are as full of vnbeleefe, as he, and much more: yet Chriſt will not refuſe vs, if we do not obſtinatly remaine in it, but are willing to be holpen of it, and haue a deſire to beleeue, by the meanes that he ſhall beſtow vpon vs. And this is the vſe that we are to mak of the vnbeleefe of S. Thomas, euen then when we heare it read vpon his day.

The Papiſts did not ſo: for beſides that they had a great number of coũterfeit Saints in their Calẽder, whoſe names were not written in the booke of life; ſome of them traytors, and others as ill, or worſe then they: vpon their feſtiuall daies, they cauſed to be read out of *Legenda aurea*, that is their Legend of lies, a ſtorie of their liues, full of all vertues, and miracles that they

they wrought, ſome in their life, ſome after their death, whereof moſt were fained, and ſome of them moſt abſurd. And thus they made them to be Gods vpon the earth, not making mention of any fault of theirs at any time, eſpecially ſo great as theſe, that we haue heard of in S. Thomas, S. Paul, and the reſt.

Whereby it came to paſſe, partly by the obſeruation of thoſe daies, and partly by hearing what was then reported of them out of their ſtories, that the cõmon people were brought into a ſuperſtitious admiration of them, and had no hope by imitating their vertues to be like them: but rather did worſhip them by meanes of the ſtraunge and incredible things, that they heard of them. And ſo there was no comfort from them for poore ſinners, but only for their merits and mediation: for they did not ſpeake of their infirmities and falls. But we ſee,

how the Scriptures ſet out the true Saints of God after an other manner: not onely in their miracles and vertues, but in their greateſt corruptions and ſinnes: that we knowing what they were of themſelues, and what they are by the mercie of God, and the grace of Chriſt; the pooreſt ſinner might be comforted in themſelues by the one, and giue thanks to God for the other. Seeing that there is no ſinne in themſelues, which they haue not ſeene pardoned and cured in ſome of the Saints or other: nor any grace wanting to themſelues, which by that experience of Gods goodnes which they haue ſeene in others, they might not hope for in themſelues in ſome meaſure.

BVt I come to the principal thing in this text, which is the great infirmitie, and wonderfull vnbeleefe that was in the Apoſtle *S. Thomas*, declared in theſe wordes of his owne, that

that when the reſt of the Diſciples had told him, that they had ſeene the Lord, he anſwered them, Except I ſee in his hands the print of the nayles, and put my finger into the print of the nailes, and put mine hand into his ſide, I will not beleeue it.

The circumſtance of time, and many occurrants going before this, doe aggrauate the greatnes of his vnbeleefe. For this was done the eight day after Chriſts reſurrection: then he did ſhew himſelfe vnto *Thomas*, as it is ſaide, verſ. 26. Eight daies after his Diſciples were againe within, and Thomas with them, then came Ieſus, when the doores were ſhut, & ſtood in the middes, and ſaid, Peace be vnto you: after he ſaid to Thomas, Put thy finger here, and ſee mine hands: and put forth thine hand, and put it into my ſide, and be not faithleſſe, but faithfull. In the meane ſeaſon he had appeared vnto *Marie Magdalene* at

the ſepulchre the firſt day of his reſurrection earely in the morning, and ſhee knew him: for he called her *Marie*, and ſhee anſwered, *Rabboni*, that is to ſay, maſter, verſ. 17. at what time, ſhee was willed to goe tell the Diſciples, that he was riſen: and ſhee did ſo: and alſo ſhewed them, what other words he had ſpoken vnto her: but none of them did beleeue her: as *S. Marke* ſaith. Thus at the firſt hearing of it, Thomas was incredulous, as well as the reſt. And the ſame day toward the euening he appeared vnto two other as they were in the way to Emaus, and they returned preſently, and tould the Diſciples of it, but they did not beleeue them neither.

Mark. 16. 11.

verſ. 13.

The ſame night therefore he appeared vnto the eleuen, as they ſate together, and caſt in their teeth their vnbeleefe, and hardnes of heart, becauſe they beleeued not them, who had now twiſe told them, that they had

had ſeene him, beeing riſen againe, verſ. 14. And becauſe their vnbeleefe was ſo great at that time, to put them out of al doubt for the time to come, he ſhewed them his hands, and his ſide that was pierced, and the print of the nayles in the one, & of the ſpeare in the other, and bad them looke on them, that they might know that it was he indeede, as *S. Iohn* the Euangeliſt doth report it. Ioh. 20. 20.

At this time *Thomas* was not preſent among them. The Lord of his infinite wiſdome and goodnes thus diſpoſing of it, for the further good both of Thomas, and of all the reſt, and of the whole Church: that by this meanes there might be a new confirmation of his reſurrection, by a ſecond and more ſenſible apparition: when they ſhould not onely ſee againe the print of the nailes in his hands, but for Thomas alſo to put his finger into them. But in the meane-

while, all the reſt tell him, what they had ſeene, namely, not onely Chriſt in ſome forme, but ſo certenly that he ſpake vnto them, and ſhewed them his hands and his feete, and the print of the nayles in them, ſo that they could not poſſibly be deceiued in ſo cleare a matter: yet for all this he not onely not gi eth credit vnto ſome one of them ſeuerally, but not vnto all of them ioyntly, beeing ſo many, and ſo credible witneſſes: and further, is ſo wilfull and obſtinate, and ſo addicted to his owne ſenſes and feeling, that he tells them plainly, that vnles he himſelfe ſee the print of the nayles in his hands, and may put his finger into them; and the print of the ſpeare in his ſide, and may put his hand into that, he will neuer beleeue it.

This is a maruelous thing, & may ſeeme iuſtly to be wondred at, that he beeing an Apoſtle, and one that had beene conuerſant with our Saviour Chriſt

Christ a long time, and had heard his doctrine, and seene his miracles; yea, had preached saluation in his name with the rest: and had heard Christ oftē say, that he must be put to death, and the third day rise againe: that though he did generally beleeue in him, yet he was not perswaded particularly of this article of his resurrection. But such is our corruption, and we doe so receiue the Spirit but in measure, that we may be true beleeuers in generall, and yet vnbeleeuers in many particulars: as we see in the Apostle here, who beleeuing Christ to be the sonne of God, and the Sauiour of the world, and so held the maine point of saluation, failed in the particular manner, and was not yet perswaded of the truth of his resurrection. But for all this we are not to account him, as an infidell, but thinke thus with our selues, if such a man as he, was subiect vnto so great doubtings,

tings, no maruell then, if I in many particulars finde my faith to be so full of doubting and wauering. Onely let vs in these doubtings still vse the meanes, and God will at one time or other bleſſe some of them vnto vs. As Thomas here not beleeuing that Christ was risen, though the rest of the Apostles did tell him of it, did not forsake their companie, but came into their assemblies vpon the Lords day, to serue Christ with them, and then Christ did appeare vnto him, and ridde him of his vnbeleefe. Whereas if he had beene still absent, as he was before, and therefore hee remained longer in his vnbeleefe then they, God might haue depriued him of all meanes, and iustly haue giuen him vp to his vnbeleefe.

But this is a greater wonder, and herein his vnbeleefe doth appeare much more: that besides the former things, when the other Apostles, whom

whom he by long experience knew to be very reuerend and credible mē, told him that they had ſeene the Lord, and after what manner, euen with the prints of the nailes, & of the ſpeare in his body, yet he ſo diſtruſted all of them, that he would beleeue none of them. Oftentimes wee beleeue meaner men and of leſſe credite in matters of great vncertentie, and of ſmall moment: therefore not to beleeue ſo many and of ſo good credit, and in a thing of great moment, it beeing true alſo, doth plainly ſhew, how deeply vnbeleefe was rooted in him. Eſpecially if we conſider how he further addeth, that if there were neuer ſo many more of them, let thē be, what they will be, that ſhould tell him ſo, he would beleeue none of thē but his owne ſelfe, and his owne ſenſe and feeling: for vales he could ſee in his hands the print of the nailes, and put his finger into the print of the nailes,

nailes, and put his hand into his ſide, he would not beleeue it.

And it ſeemeth, that the reſt of the Apoſtles were ſubiect vnto this vnbeleefe, though not in the like meaſure: for when Marie Magdalen at Chriſts commandement, came vnto them, and finding them weeping & mourning, tolde them for their comfort, that Chriſt was riſen; though they
Mar.16.11 heard her ſay, that he was aliue, and had appeared to her, they beleeued it not: nay they were ſo farre from beleeuing it, that her wordes ſeemed
Luk.24.11. vnto them, as a fained thing: ſo that they were not only ſomwhat doutfull of the matter, but did wholly reiect it as a meere fable. Moreouer, when two of the diſciples, the name of the one beeing Cleopas, going to Emmaus, Chriſt did appeare vnto them in the way, and though they knew him not at the firſt, yet at the laſt their eyes were opened, ſo that they knew him

him perfectly, and so returning to Ierusalem, saide vnto the eleuen, The Lord is risen indeede: and so doe auouch it constantly with a note of asseuerance; and told them also, what was done in the way, and how they knew him at the last: They beleeued them neither. So that this case was not of Thomas alone, but of all the rest, that we might see that the best seruants of God of all, are greatly pestered with these remnants of vnbeleefe. That as Dauid saith, If thou, O Lord, straitly markest iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? that is, not the best mã in the world, much lesse such a wretch as I: So we may say, if these holy men were so full of vnbeleefe in this thing, no maruell, if such a poore sinner as I am, stand doubtfull and perplexed in many things: and as Christ did succour them, so I hope he will be mercifull vnto me, that desire to beleeue.

Mar. 16. 13.

Psal. 130. 3.

And

And it is very probable, that the reſt of the Apoſtles in this vnbeleefe of theirs, were ſubiect vnto the ſame temptations that Thomas was, and had the ſame thoughts to hinder thē from beleeuing, that he had: and namely, that they ſpake within themſelues, as he did openly, though for ſhame they did not vtter it, as often it falleth out, that many are afraid to vtter their temptations, they are ſo fearefull and ſo ſtraunge, that they thinke, that none are poſſeſſed with them, but themſelues. But the Apoſtle telleth the Corinthians, that no
Cor.10.13. tentation had taken hold of them, but ſuch as appertaineth vnto man; that is, which proceedeth of mans infirmitie, and which mans nature is ſubiect vnto: that they might not be diſcouraged, or diſpaire for that, that he had ſaid vnto them. And therefore he addeth, that God is faithfull, and would not ſuffer them to be tempted

aboue that, that they were able, but would giue an issue with the temptation, that they might be able to beare it: as he did here vnto the rest of the Apostles, and to Thomas himselfe.

And that they had indeede the same thoughts of vnbeleef that Thomas had, it appeareth by the fact of Christ. For when he came among them, and they were abashed and afraid, supposing that they had seene a spirit, he said vnto them; Why are ye troubled? and wherfore do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold mine hands, and my feete, for it is my selfe; handle me, and see: and when he had thus spoken he shewed them his hands and his feete. So that Christ in shewing them his hands and feete, that so they might be ridde of those thoughts and doubts, that hindred them from beleeuing; did manifestly shew, that he knew the thoughts of their hearts to be these, that vnlesse they Luk. 24. 37.

they saw in his hands and feete the print of the nayles, they would not beleeue that it was he. Christ therefore like a skilfull physitian of their soules did applie his medicine according to their maladie; and therefore when as at his first apparition he did shew vnto them his hands and his feete, he doing all things in wisdom and to some good purpose, did thereby declare, what thoughts of vnbeleefe they were troubled with.

If such holy men as these, who had so many meanes to helpe their faith, did not sufficiently profit by them at the first; but were found thus incredulous: then we may be assured, that vnbeleefe is more deepely rooted in vs, then we be aware of: and if after many meanes, and long continuance in the same we finde it in our selues more then we would, we must not too much suspect our selues, as long as we are sorie for it, and doe groane

vnder

vnder it, as vnder an heauie burden, desiring to be eased of the same. For indeed there is no sinne in the world, that hath more infected mankinde, then that: it came in with our first parents euen in Paradise, and it will continue as long as there is any man vpon earth: it is the first sinne that possesseth all men: and it is the last that we must striue against: in so much that when we haue ouercome all other, then wil our vnbeleefe most of all trouble vs. And especially we shall finde this to be true in all afflictions, and in the houre of death: when the temptations of pride, of voluptuousnes, of reuenge, &c. shall leaue vs, as hauing receiued their deadly blow; then will vnbeleefe, and distrust fall vpon vs afresh, as though it had neuer beene wounded, or neuer so much as incountred with.

For seeing that faith is, as the Apostle calleth it, A sheild wherewith Ep. 6. 16.

we may quench all the fierie darts of the deuill: therefore he laboureth moſt of all to pull it out of our hands altogether, or ſo to weaken it in many things, that his darts may eaſily pearce through it into our ſoules to deſtroy them: that is, his temptation may deceiue vs one way or other. For as long as this sheild of faith is whol, and we be able to hold it out againſt our ſpirituall enemie, we ſhall preuaile againſt him, whether he tempteth vs vnto any ſinne in time to come, or for any ſinne of the time paſt. But if we let fall the ſheild of faith, or doe not defend our ſelues with it, we lie open to all temptations of Satan: that is, if we altogether giue ouer faith, or fall to doubting of the truth of his word.

Adam and Eue were firſt ouercome by vnbeleefe, and that was the cauſe of their ruine: for the deuill by diſputing with the woman like a ſubtile

tile Sophiſter, brought her at the laſt to cal into queſtion the truth of Gods word, and to ſay, Of the fruit of the tree, which is in the middes of the garden, God hath ſaid, ye ſhall not eate of it, neither ſhall ye touch it, leaſt ye die: whereas the Lord had ſaid in expreſſe words before, In the day, that ye ſhall eate thereof, ye ſhall die the death: that is, ye ſhall aſſuredly die: which if they had ſteadfaſtly beleeued, they had not beene ouercome of his temptation. So in all ſinne that we commit there is vnbeleefe, more or leſſe; for if we fall by preſumption, then we beleeue not his threatnings; if by deſpaire, then we beleeue not his promiſes. And iuſtifying faith though it principally looketh to the promiſes of ſaluation; yet generally it reſpecteth the whole word of God. The manifold ſinnes then that we ſee in other, and doe commit our ſelues, doe apparently

Gen. 3. 3.

chap. 2. 17.

ſhew, how full of vnbeleefe we and the whole world is: for if we did beleeue God to be true in his threatnings, and in his promiſes, we ſhould be kept from ſinne.

Beſides, when men are fallen into any ſinnes, what is the cauſe that they doe not ſpeedily repent them of thē, and ſo leaue them, but onely vnbeleefe? For if they did rightly beleeue either the promiſes of God, as, At what time ſoeuer a ſinner ſhall returne from his ſinnes, and doe that which is lawfull and right, he ſhall ſurely liue, and ſhall not die: all his tranſgreſſions, that he hath committed ſhall not be remembred, or laide to his charge: they would preſently repent, and leaue their ſinnes, that they might be forgiuen them. Or if they beleeued his threatnings; as, Kiſſe the ſonne, leaſt he be angrie, and ye periſh in the midde way, when his wrath ſhall ſuddenly burne, bleſſed

Ezek. 18. 21.

Pſal. 2. 12.

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are all that truſt in him; they would ſpeedily repent, whiles mercie is offered; leaſt God take them away before, or bring ſome great iudgement vpon them. But contrarie to the truth of Gods word (according to the nature of vnbeleefe) they imagine ſome thing of their owne head, wherein they reſt; and let all men ſay to the contrarie, what they will, they will beleeue none but themſelues, & their owne conceit.

As that, they ſhall doe wel enough though they continue in their ſinnes: or that they ſhall haue time enough hereafter to repent them at their leiſure: and that they may repent them when they liſt, or ſome ſuch like: of which there is nothing promiſed in the word of God, but the cleane contrary ſet down often and very plainly. Therefore that men, when they haue fallen into any ſinne, do ſo eaſily continue in them, and either repent thē

not at all, or doe it very ſlowly, & that doth bewray ſufficiently, how full of vnbeleefe they are. Seeing therefore that it is ſo vniuerſally ſpread ouer all men, no maruell, if the better ſort doe complaine ſo much of it in thēſelues, and finde it to be a great deale more, then they would.

Agine, let vs be in trouble, & want meanes to helpe our ſelues, and ſee if we be not prone to diſtruſt God? and ſo not to depend on his prouidence: but rather to vſe vnlawfull meanes to helpe our ſelues: or to be too reſtles & vnquiet in the vſe of thoſe that are lawfull: and ſo either altogether to forget to ſecke vnto God by prayer: or elſe to doe it very coldly, and with little hope. Though God hath ſaide, Call vpon me in thy trouble, ſo will I deliuer thee, and thou ſhalt glorifie me. And be contented with thoſe things, that ye haue, for God hath ſaid, I will not faile thee, nor forſake thee.

Pſal. 50. 15.

Hebr. 13. 6.

thee. And first seeke the kingdome of God, and his righteousnesse, and all things necessary shall be ministred vnto you: and a thousand such promises more: which doth shew that vnbeleefe possesseth men euery manner of way, and there is no man in the world altogether free from it, though it be a great deale more in some, then in other. Heb. 6. 33.

And to be short, when we are tepted vnto any sinne, we by lamentable experience finde, that we are too easily ouercome, because we beleeue not Gods threatnings, that he will assuredly punish it. And when we are tempted for any sinne, how soone are we readie to despaire, because we beleeue not the promises of forgiuenes vnto the repentant? So that this sinne is found in the whole course of our life: in so much that when we haue ouercome many other sinnes in the first and second table; then we shal be

either wholly ouercome with vnbeleefe, or greatly polluted with it.

The Deuill did greatly assault our Sauiour Christ with this, both in the first entrance into his office, and also in the last discharging of it. First of all in the wildernes, when he would by that long time of abstinence & want of corporall foode by the space of fourtie daies, and fourtie nights, haue perswaded him, that God had forsaken him, and had no care of him: for then he would haue prouided for him all this while: and therefore he must now shift for himselfe, and if he could doe any thing, he must shew his power. If he be the sonne of God indeed, he must command that those stones be made bread. Secondly, when he was vpon the crosse; for then they that passed by reuiling him, and wagging their heads, said, If thou be the sonne of God, come downe from the crosse: and the Priests also mocking

Math. 4. 3.

1 chap. 27 39.

king him, saide; He saued others, but he cannot saue himselfe: if he be the king of Israel, let him now come downe from the crosse; so that they concluded against him to the weakning of his faith, that God did not care for him, because he did not presently deliuer him.

Thus by tempting him to vnbeleefe in the beginning, he sought to discourage him from it: and by the same temptation of vnbeleefe in the ending, to cause him to giue it ouer, before he had happily finished it. And after the same manner the deuill setteth vpon all the members of Christ: in the beginning of their calling, he greatly buffeteth them with vnbeleefe, and puts into them many feares and doubts, that their sinnes shal not be pardoned; that so they might as men tired in the combate, giue ouer, and returne to their old byas. And before their death he terrifieth them

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againe with feare, that they ſhall not
giue to beliefe, that ſo in deſpairing
of ſo great a matter, they might giue
ouer ſeeking it any longer. But Chriſt
did ouercome by the power of his
Spirit in thoſe temptations of his,
that by the ſame Spirit he might ſuc-
Heb. 2. 17. cour vs in ours. And ſo in all things
he was made like his brethren, that
he might be mercifull, and a faithfull
high Prieſt to make reconciliation
for the ſinnes of the people: for in
that he ſuffered, and was tempted, he
is able to ſuccour them that are temp-
ted. As he did here in due ſeaſon help
the vnbeleefe of the Apoſtles, in ſhew-
ing vnto them his hands, and his feet,
but moſt of all his weake and poore
ſeruant Thomas. For when he had
Ioh. 20. 25. ſaide, Except I ſee in his hands the
print of the nailes, and put my finger
into the print of the nayles, and put
my hand into his ſide, I will not be-
leeue: Then a little after Chriſt ap-

peared

peared vnto him, and ſaid vnto him, Put thy finger here, and ſee mine hands; and put forth thine hand, and put it into my ſide; and be not faithleſſe, but faithfull. verſ. 27.

BVt to proceede, the firſt degree of Thomas his vnbeleefe appeareth in this, that he did heare this often, and of diuers, that were very credible, and yet he did not beleeue it: as firſt of all of diuers holy and godly women, and namely of Marie Magdalene, and Ioanna, and Marie the mother of Iames, and other women with them, who earely in the morning returning from the ſepulchre, told the eleuen that Chriſt was riſen: and alſo he heard it againe of Cleopas, and an other diſciple, who told them, they had ſeene him, and ſpoken with him after his reſurrection: and now the third time he heard it of all his fellow Apoſtles, beeing ten in nũber, all of them very credible, who did Luk. 24. 10. verſ. 33.

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auouch it vnto him vpon their owne knowledge, and ſaide, that they had ſeene him themſelues. It was appointed in the equitie of the law, that in
Deut. 19 15 the mouth of two witneſſes, or at the mouth of three witneſſes, euery matter ſhould be eſtabliſhed. Therefore there was no colour to diſcredit ſo many witneſſes, eſpecially comming in to teſtifie the ſame truth at ſeuerall times. But herein appeareth the nature of infidelitie, which is, to cauſe vs, though we heare the truth of God witneſſed vnto vs by ſundrie men, and at diuers times, not to beleeue any one of them in diuers things, but onely our ſelues. And though they be neuer ſo graue, and reuerend, and conſtant in auouching of it, & found in proouing of it, yet all ſhall be as we thinke, and ſay our ſelues, and not otherwiſe: and thus they are wiſer in
Prou. 26. 16 their owne conceit, then ſeauen men that can render a reaſon. Whereby it com-

commeth to passe, that they hinder themselues in their saluation: for though God send his seruants vnto them, to tell them his will, they will beleeue nothing, but as they cõceiue themselues.

And this though it be a great sinne, yet it was not proper vnto Thomas only, but it was found in the rest of the Apostles at this present. And that we might not wonder at it in thẽ without any profit, we shall see it as deeply rooted in our selues, & others: for this is but a looking glasse to let vs see our owne vnbeleefe in. For how often haue we heard one & the same truth constantly deliuered vnto vs by the Prophets, Euangelists, and Apostles? & yet we doe not beleeue them: we haue sundry times heard them, and read them, yea they haue bin often preached vnto vs, and that by sundry of the faithfull ministers and seruants of God; and yet we giue

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no credit vnto them: and this is too true, whether we looke to Gods fearefull threatnings, or his mercifull promiſes, both for this life, and the life to come.

How oftentimes, and by how many men haue we heard, that vnleſſe we repent, we ſhall all periſh; and yet very few beleeue it, for they goe on ſtill in their ſinne, and thinke that they ſhall doe well enough. And that
Math. 3. 10 euery tree, that bringeth not forth good fruit, ſhal be hewen downe, and caſt into the fire: that is, all wicked ones, that will not ſpeedily amend their liues, ſhall be caſt into hell fire: and yet though they liue neuer ſo wickedly, they thinke to be ſaued, as well as the reſt. And though a ſinner
Eccles. 8. 12. doe euill an hundred times, and God prolong his daies, yet it ſhall not goe well with him at the laſt; yet men thinke the contrarie, that ſeeing they haue eſcaped in one ſinne vnpuniſhed,

ed, and the second, & third time, that therefore it shall goe well with them for euer: and they thinke, as the Prophet saith, that because God holds his tongue, he is like them, and liketh their waies well enough. Psal. 50. 21.

Moreouer, how often haue we heard, and by how many, that he that is angrie with his brother vnaduisedly, is culpable of iudgement & whosoeuer hateth his brother is a manslaier: and yet men nourish these euill affections in themselues, as though these sayings were vtterly false. And hath it not often beene sounded in our eares by men of great credit, That neither adulterers, nor fornicatours, shall inherit the kingdome of God: but yet I would to God, that the wicked liues of too many did not sufficiētly bewray the thoughts of their hearts, namly, that they did not only somewhat doubt of the truth of this, but they thinke it to be a meere fable: Matth. 5. 22. 1. Ioh. 3. 15. 1. Cor. 6.

and

and let men say what they wil against these sinnes, they will beleeue none but themselues: so wholly are their hearts possessed with infidelitie.

Yea let a man come, and deale with one in any sinne of his, in which he is setled, and denounce the iudgements of God against him out of the truth of his word: and let a second & a third man likewise preach the same vnto him at an other time: and he yet is resolute in himselfe, he knoweth as much of that matter, as any man can tell him, he will beleeue none but his owne deceitfull heart, and his owne feeling; vnlesse he feele the smart of it vpon himselfe, he will giue no credit vnto it: like vnto the men of Sodom, who when righteous Lot told them of fire and brimstone, that should come downe from heauen vpon them for their horrible wickednes, they iudged him to be an old doting foole, and would not beleeue it,

Genesis 19.

vntill

vntill they ſaw it, and felt it themſelues burning about their eares, when it was too late.

By this infidelitie, which is in vs naturally, we are enemies to our own ſaluation, in that we will not beleeue this part of Gods holy word, preached vnto vs often by them, that are worthie of all credit. And this was the eſtate of all of vs, till God of his great mercie did reforme vs, & purge vs of this vnbeleefe, that for the amendment of our liues, and repenting vs of our ſinnes, that we might be ſaued, we would beleeue nothing of Gods iudgements, and of hell fire, though preached by many; but onely ſuch things, as our blind reaſon did perſwade our falſe hearts of: and that we did ſticke faſt vnto, whatſoeuer men ſaid, and of neuer ſo many to the contrarie. And the ſame vnbeleefe remaineth ſtill in vs in meaſure in that part, that is vnregenerate.

We muſt therefore examine our ſelues, that we may find it out, & pray to God to helpe vs againſt it, which no doubt he will, if we ſeeke vnto him, and be deſirous to be holpen of it; as he did here his ſeruant Thomas the Apoſtle. For this ſtorie of his vnbeleefe is written, to comfort all thoſe that are fallen into vnbeleefe, and are deſirous to be ridde of it, and to beleeue, as this Apoſtle was. But if men for want of due examination and triall of their owne heart, doe preſume of that, that is not in them: and ſo imagine that they beleeue, when they doe not, or to haue more faith then they haue; they ſhall one day finde, that their phantaſie hath deceiued them, and they ſhal be farre from beeing holpen in that, that they want. For many thinke that it is the eaſieſt thing in the world to beleeue, when as indeede it is the hardeſt; and it is more hard to ouercome our reaſon

ſon in beleeuing, then the affections of our heart in doing: and therefore Chriſt ſaith, The gate is ſtrait, and the way narrow that leadeth vnto life, and few there be that finde it. Math. 7. 14.

And that which hath bin ſaid of Gods iudgments, it is true alſo of his promiſes, that there is as much vnbeleefe in vs towards the one, as towards the other. For how often haue we read the ſame ſweet and comfortable promiſes of God made for our good: yea how often haue they bin preached ouer and ouer againe vnto vs; and yet we rather not beleeue thē at all, or not as we ſhould. Let vs take one for example. The Lord ſaith by his Prophet, Call vpon me in the day of thy trouble, ſo I will deliuer thee: and who ſo euer ſhall call on the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaued. Yet when trouble and affliction cōmeth, oh how fewe doe beleeue this to be true? as appeareth by their practiſe; Pſal. 50. 15. Ioel 2. 32.

for how few or none at all almoſt doe ſeeke vnto the Lord by earneſt and feruent prayer? and they that doe, with how little confidence and hope of beeing heard, doe they practiſe it? which ſheweth how ful of vnbeleefe they are.

Few or none can ſay, as Salomon
Prov. 18.10. doth, that the word of the Lord is their ſtrong tower, and that they run to that, as to their ſure defence: or as Dauid taught the people to ſay,
Pſal. 20.7. Some truſt in chariots, and ſome in horſes, but we remember the name of the Lord our God; that this is the firſt thing that they remember, as that that ſhall doe them moſt good. But prayer is either ſo wholly neglected, or men come to it ſo ſlowly, as it were drawing their legs after thē, and laſt of all, as though they did not one whit beleeue the promiſes this way made vnto them.

Nay, which is more, if any come

to them in their trouble, and tell thē that they haue often found this to be true by experience in themſelues: as Dauid doth, The poore man cried, and the Lord heard him, and ſaued him out of all his troubles: yet we doe not beleeue that we ſhall finde it to be true in our ſelues. Eſpecially if God deferre vs any while, we can giue no credit to the truth of his promiſes, vntill we ſee them verified in our ſelues: but we are readie to ſay, vnleſſe we ſee and feele theſe things in our ſelues, we will not beleeue it. Pſ. 34.6.

Againe, how often, and by how many haue we heard this truth of God, All things worke together for the beſt vnto them, that loue God: that is, God will turne all the afflictions of his people vnto their good in the ende: yet when the leaſt croſſe doth befall vs, how are we diſmaied, as though this were falſe, becauſe we doe not beleeue it? And if any ſhall Rom. 8.28.

then ſay vnto vs, be of good comfort, beare it patiently, the Lord herein ſeeketh your good, and you ſhall come out of this affliction better thē you were before; yet we thinke it a matter impoſſible; yea, a meere fable: and that it is better for vs to be otherwiſe, and ſo we will not beleeue him: nor others, though they ſhould come immediately, and tell vs the ſame vpon good trial, that they found it to be ſo in themſelues, as Dauid
Pſal. 119.71. ſaith, It is good for me that I haue beene afflicted, that I may learne thy
67. ſtatutes: and before I was afflicted, I went aſtray, but now I keepe thy word: and as the Apoſtle Paul alſo ſaith vpon his owne experience, and the reſt of the faithfull in whoſe
Rom. 8.28. name he ſpeaketh, We know, that all things worke together for the beſt vnto them that feare God. Not onely I my ſelfe, but many others alſo do know this to be true. Which is as if a

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skilfull Phiſitian ſhould ſay vnto his ſicke patient; take this potion, though it be bitter, it is for your health, I haue found the proofe of it by long experience: nay not onely I my ſelfe, but all we Phyſitians doe know it to be ſo: and yet the patient would beleeue none of them, but himſelfe. Oh what a great note of infidelitie is within vs? how had we neede to ſtriue againſt it?

To be ſhort, how often haue we heard this promiſe of our Sauiour Chriſt; Firſt ſeeke the kingdome of God, and his righteouſnes; and all outward things ſhal be miniſtred vnto you: and that alſo of the Apoſtle Paul vnto Timothie, Godlines is profitable vnto all things, which hath the promiſe of this life, and of that that is to come: yet let vs be in any want, and it is a wonder to ſee, how hardly or not at all we with cheerefulneſſe depend vpon Gods prouiMath. 6. 33.

1. Tim. 4. 8.

dence, vntill ſuch time as we can ſee, how to prouide for our ſelues. Let other men come, and ſay what they will, and what they haue found by experience in themſelues, and in others concerning the truth of this, we doe not almoſt regard it, or take any comfort in it: ſo full of vnbeleefe are we, & ſo common a thing is it in the matters of God, to giue credit to none but to our ſelues: as the Apoſtle S. Thomas ſaith of himſelfe here.

Laſtly, let vs come to the matter
Reuel. 12.10 of our ſaluation: if Satan the accuſer of the brethren, and our owne conſcience doe ſet before our eies the remembrance of our ſinnes, and preſſe vs ſomewhat therewith; though we be heartily ſory for them, & do weep
Math. 26 75. bitterly, as Peter did at the remembrance of his fall, and do wiſh a thouſand times that we had neuer committed them, & thus trauell & groane vnder the heauy burden of them, as

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that that is able to preſſe vs down vnto the bottom of hell, and vnfainedly turne from them vnto God, ſaying with Dauid, Haue mercie vpon me, Pſal. 51. 1. O God, according to thy louing kindneſſe: according to the multitude of thy compaſſions put away mine iniquites: yet how hard a matter is it then to finde that in our hearts, which we ſay with our mouth, I beleeue the forgiuenes of my ſinnes; eſpecially in the day of temptation, and in the howre of death: though wee haue oftentimes before heard the bleſſed ſaying of the Apoſtle, This is a true ſaying, and by all 1. Tim. 1. 15. meanes worthy to be receiued, that Chriſt Ieſus came into the world to ſaue ſinners: and that comfortable voice of our Sauiour Chriſt, Come vnto me all ye that are wearie, and laden, and I will eaſe you. Matth. 11. 28.

This then we ſee is no new thing, for men not to beleeue ſundry parts of

of Gods word brought vnto thē by the miniſterie of diuers of his faithful ſeruants, by reaſon of the great vnbeleefe and hardnes of heart that is in them: whereby it commeth to paſſe that their owne vnderſtanding doth more preuaile with them to diſtruſt, then the teſtimonie of many to beleeue. How then had we neede to find out this vnbeleefe in our ſelues: which when we haue done, we are not to iudge too hardly of our ſelues, ſeeing that it is ſo common: but onely lament & bewaile it, & ſeeke vnto Chriſt to be holpen of it, who is the author and finiſher of our faith: and ſay with the Apoſtles, Lord increaſe our faith: and with the man in the Goſpel, Lord I beleue, helpe my vnbeleefe.

Hebr. 12. 2.

Luk. 17. 5.

& 9. 24.

And if there be ſuch great ſtreams of vnbeleefe in Gods children, till they be holpen of it, what a bottomleſſe ſea, thinke you, is there of it in the

the wicked? whereby it commeth to paſſe, that they are filled with all atheiſme and prophannes; caſting the word of God behinde their backs, ſo that let neuer ſo many learned and godly men, witneſſe the truth vnto them for their amendment, they will beleeue no more, then they haue determined beforehand with thẽſelues. Let vs pray to God for them, that they may haue better mindes, euen deſirous to beleeue; and then ſhall they be holpen in time, as the Apoſtle S. Thomas was. And for our ſelues, let vs labour to haue teachable hearts, that we may reuerence & giue credit vnto them, who in the myſterie of our ſaluation know more then we doe: and haue in the matter of faith a great deale more experience then we our ſelues. That ſo it may come to paſſe, of what minde ſo euer we haue beene before, that when Gods faithfull ſeruants, whome vve ſhould

ſhould eſteeme and truſt, they ſhall tell vs ſo and ſo: whether for Gods iudgements, or for his promiſes, or for the direction of our liues, we may beleeue, and obey them. Then ſhall we come to faith, and be confirmed in it: for he that regardeth inſtruction, is in the way of life. Prov. 10.17.

And if in other matters we thinke it reaſonable, that we ſhould beleeue thoſe, that haue more knowledge thē our ſelues; yea euen cleane contrarie to that, that we thought before: as for the matter of our health we beleeue many skilfull Phyſitians for the ſtate of our bodies, and many expert lawyers for the ſtate of our lands and goods; why ſhould we not then in matters of diuinitie, and for the ſtate of our ſoules, giue more credit to many skilfull Diuines then to our ſelues. Eſpecially when as the generall rule holdeth as well in that, as in any other ſcience: that euery skilfull man

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is to be credited in his owne arte and facultie: our reaſon is more corrupt in this, then in any other thing, and therefore there is more cauſe that we ſhould beleeue others, then our ſelues.

Therefore as in other matters, when we are doubtfull, we conferre with them that haue more skill and knowledge, and giue credit vnto thē contrarie to our owne thoughts, and we are readie to relie vpon them rather then vpon our ſelues: So let vs doe in matters of faith, and let vs not offer Gods ſeruants and our ſelues this great wrong, that we wil beleeue all men in other things, ſauing then in this. It is too much, that we haue done it ſo often alreadie, let vs not continue in it, that we ſhould come to the Church, and heare Gods word preached, and goe away not beleeuing it: and come againe the next day, and then depart away, as full of vn-

vnbeleefe, as before: and thus from day to day, & ſo ſtill be of this mind, that whatſoeuer men ſay, we will beleeue none but our ſelues, thinking that we haue reaſon as well as they, and therefore vnles we can conceiue it by reaſon, we will not admit it, whatſoeuer they ſay.

For faith is aboue reaſon, therefore we muſt beleeue the ſeruants of God in things whereof we can conceiue no reaſon: nay reaſon is againſt faith, and there is nothing in vs more to hinder vs from beleeuing, then to
2.Cor.2.14. harken to our owne reaſon. For the naturall man (by his beſt reaſon) perceiueth not the things of the ſpirit of God: for they are fooliſhnes vnto him: neither can he know them (by his owne wit) becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned: that is, by a ſupernaturall inlightning of the ſprit of God. So that matters of faith we can not only not by reaſon comprehend thē,

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but they ſeeme fooliſhnes vnto all thē that will no further giue credit vnto things, then they be demonſtrated by reaſon: which made the Apoſtles, when the women came from the ſepulchre, & told them that Chriſt was riſen, not onely not to beleeue them, but that their words ſeemed vnto thē as a fained thing, and a meere fable that had no truth in it: and therefore Chriſt ſaith in the Goſpel, If any man will follow me, let him forſake himſelfe, that is, his owne reaſon moſt of all, that ſo he may beleeue others contrary vnto it. Luk. 24. 11. Math. 16. 24.

And this is that which is ſo highly commended by the ſpirit of God in our father Abraham, that he aboue all hope (that reaſon could affoard him) beleeued vnder hope, that he ſhould be the father of many nations: for he conſidered not his owne bodie, which was now dead (that is, void of ſtrength, and vnmeete to get chil- Rom. 4. 18.

children) beeing almoſt an hundred yeares old: neither the deadneſſe of Sarahs wombe: neither did he doubt of the promiſe of God through vnbeleefe; but was ſtrengthned in faith, and gaue glorie to God, beeing fully aſſured, that he that had promiſed it, was able to doe it: where we ſee, that renouncing his owne reaſon, which would haue held him in vnbeleefe, he reſted vpon the truth and power of God, and ſo beleeued aboue that by reaſon could be ſhewed him, or he able to conceiue: and ſo muſt we doe alſo.

Heb. 11. 3. The Apoſtle ſaith, that through faith we vnderſtand, that the world was ordained by the word of God, and that the things which we ſee, are not made of things which did appeare: that is, that this great & beautifull frame of the world was made of nothing, is a matter not to be comprehended by any reaſon, but onely by

by faith: which made not onely the Epicures, but also some of the wisest Philosophers, to hold, that the world was not eternall: for it was vnto them a principle in reason, that of nothing, comes nothing; neither can you so multiplie nothing, that there should come any thing of it. Therefore the Apostle saith, that he that will hold, that all these things, which we see in heauen and earth were made of nothing, he must beleeue it aboue all reason.

And who can by any reason conceiue the truth of this article of our faith, The resurrection of the bodie? that is, that these very bodies of ours, beeing turned into dust and ashes, the same in euery part and member should be raised vp againe. Some of the wiser sort of the Heathen did acknowledge the immortalitie of the soule, and that there was a place of ioy for them that liued well, and of

paine for them that ſwarued from the rules of right reaſon, after death. But that the ſame bodies of men ſhould riſe againe, they did not ſo much as once dreame of it, becauſe they could not comprehend it by any reaſon: therefore in that matter we muſt beleeue others aboue all reaſon.

The like is to be ſaide of almes, which hath a promiſe of increaſe: ſo that by giuing to the poore we ſhall not looſe any thing, but gaine: which is a thing contrarie to reaſon, that the more a man ſhould giue away from himſelfe, the more he ſhould inrich himſelfe: and therefore few doe beleeue it, which maketh them couetous and hard hearted, and to be willing to depart from nothing, leaſt they ſhould want themſelues: and eſpecially to be moſt hard hearted to their poore brethren in the times of ſcarſitie and want, when they ſhould be moſt liberall, and by that meanes

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beſt prouide for themſelues: which S. *Paul* was ſo fully perſwaded of, that he doth commend it vnto vs by an excellent compariſon, ſaying, He which ſoweth ſparingly, ſhall reape alſo ſparingly: and he that ſoweth liberally, ſhall reape alſo liberally. 2. Cor. 9. 6. Where he compareth almes vnto ſowing of ſeede: the more a man ſoweth, the more he reapeth by Gods bleſſing: the more a man giueth, the more he receiueth by Gods promiſe: the one we ſee by experience, which maketh mē in the times of dearth and ſcarſitie, to ſow moſt: the other we comprehend by faith, which maketh the beleeuer in the hardeſt times, to be moſt liberall. Thus we ſee, what vnbeleefe is in vs, in that we giue no credit vnto others, any further then we can conceiue a reaſon of it: which is the ſame, that was in S. Thomas, and yet he was cured of it, and ſo may we by the ſame

grace of God, if we will learne this leſſon; that in the time of temptation we beleeue others aboue our ſelues: which if we doe not, it is the next way to remain in vnbeleefe for euer: but if we can come vnto this, there is hope of vs in time.

THe 2. degree of Thomas his vnbeleefe, appeares in this; that he wold not only not beleeue this, being thus often told him, diuers times, & by ſundrie credible perſons, but he will beleeue none but himſelfe: for he ſaith in plaine words, Except I ſee in his hands, the print of the nayls, I will not beleeue it. Which is, as if he had ſaid; you indeed tel me, that you haue ſeen Chriſt riſen again, & ſo do diuers others; I haue heard theſe things oftē; but I haue not yet ſeene him my ſelfe; what others haue ſeene, that appertaines not vnto me, vnleſſe I ſee him my ſelfe, I will not beleeue it. This therefore is further to be conſidered,

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becauſe ſomtime it fals out, that there is good cauſe, why we ſhould not beleeue a thing ſpokē often, & by many.

And if they be of any good credit, though there be no cauſe in truth to ſuſpect them, yet it may ſeeme vnto vs, that there is ſome: and hereupon it commeth to paſſe, that ſome in their vnbeleefe take exception againſt the Preachers, and thinke that they haue ſome cauſe, why they ſhould not beleeue thē in the things that they haue preached vnto them, though in truth there be none. But yet to be altogether of this mind, that S. Thomas was here in this matter, that we will beleeue none in the world, but our ſelues, that ſeemeth to be ſuch a thing as wanteth all colour of reaſon. And yet thus vnreaſonable is vnbeleefe, as we ſee moſt clearly in this example: for he ſaith very peremptorily, that vnleſſe I my ſelfe doe ſee in his hands the print of the

nayles, I will not beleeue it. He doth not ſay, vnles better men then you doe tell me ſo; or vnles I heare more in number; or vnles I heare better reaſon for this matter, then I doe yet, I will not beleeue it: but if all men in the world tell me of it neuer ſo often, vnles I ſee him mine owne ſelfe, I will beleeue none of them: which is, as if he had ſaid, In this caſe I will beleeue my ſelfe, and no bodie els.

We ſee then whether vnbeleefe will driue vs, if we giue place to it, euen that we ſhall beleeue none but our ſelues. And indeede ſo it is in all ſorts, in whome it raigneth, they will beleeue no more from any man, then they can perſwade themſelues by their owne reaſon: vnto that they obſtinatly ſticke againſt all men: and ſo are not aſhamed to ſay, I will beleeue none of you all; I will beleeue mine owne ſelfe, and further I will not be lead by any: no man ſhall draw me to be-

beleeue that, which mine owne reason tells me not. And thus they so much abound in their owne sense through vnbeleefe, that they perswade themselues, that they haue more reason for that they hold, then all other men haue for the contrarie.

And so let men say neuer so much against that, which they haue conceited themselues, they stil imagine, that they haue some thing to say against it, and some reason, why they should not beleeue them. And this is most true, not onely in matters of faith, but for life and conuersation: which is the cause, both that Papists and other heretikes are so obstinately addicted to their errors; and also wicked men so altogether wedded vnto their sinnes; that neither the one, nor the other can be reclaimed from them. And therefore when men haue saide what they can, they will not giue thē

ouer, for they haue determined to beleeue none but themſelues: & of this minde will they be, till God ridde them of their vnbeleefe: and then the ſaying of Chriſt ſhal be verified vpon
Ioh.20.29. them, Bleſſed are they, that haue not ſeene, and haue beleeued: that is, they ſhall beleeue others, beſides themſelues, and ſo bleſſed ſhall they be: as indeede this is the way to faith, and ſo to bleſſednes, to diſtruſt our ſelues, and to beleeue the ſeruants of God, ſpeaking vnto vs in his name: of whō
Math. 10.40. Chriſt hath ſaide, He that receiueth you, and your doctrine, receiueth me.

And that we might come vnto this, we are to remember, that true faith yeildes vnto the bare word of God againſt our owne reaſon; and ſo
Rom.4.20. giueth glory vnto God, as the Apoſtle ſayth, acknowledging, and reuerencing his truth, mercy, and power, where we can ſee no reaſon of

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it, and so prayſing him for the ſame, and reſting in it. Which we ſee to be true in Abrahã not onely in the birth of Iſaac, which was beyõd the courſe of nature, and ſo aboue all reaſon: but alſo in the offering vp of the ſaid Iſaac his ſonne, whom he loued, and in whom he receiued the promiſes, euen that with him God would eſtabliſh his couenant, and with his ſeede after him for euer: and therefore take away him, and take away all, and the hope of all: and yet at the commandement of God, he was contented to offer him vp for a burnt offering in mouñt Moriah: which he did by faith, as the Apoſtle ſaith: for he conſidered that God was able to raiſe him vp euẽ from the dead: and ſo he meaſured the performance of the promiſes of God, not by his owne reaſon, though neuer ſo great, but by the truth and power of God.

Gen. 17. 19.

chap. 22. 10.

Hebr. 11. 19.

The like may be ſaide of Noah con-

concerning the building of the Arke,
verſ. 17. of whom it is ſaid; that by faith he beeing warned of God of the things which were not as yet ſeene, mooued with reuerence, prepared the Arke to the ſauing of his houſhold. In which matter if he had conſulted with fleſh & blood, and conferred with his own reaſon, he ſhould neuer haue vndertaken ſo great a matter. For how could he thereby imagine that all the world ſhould be drowned except his family, and that they ſhould be ſaued, and all the reſt periſh: when by the ſpace of 120 yeares, he both preparing the Arke, and preaching their deſtruction, not one man or woman would beleeue it, beſides his owne family of eight perſons; might not he haue thought that he was deceiued rather then they all. And how could he haue hope that fowre men ſhould gouerne ſo great a veſſell, wherein ſhould be male & female at the leaſt

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of euery liuing thing vpon the earth and in the ayre, with ſufficient prouiſion for them all by the ſpace of an whole yeare: and that not in the great Ocean ſea, but when the whole world was a ſea. And where could he thinke to haue meanes to take and bring in all theſe fowles of the heauen, and beaſts of the earth? and how could they attend vpon them all to feede them, and to doe all things neceſſarie vnto them? And many more things might be put into his head, to cauſe him to deſiſt from this worke, as a thing impoſſible: and no doubt he was ſubiect vnto many of theſe, and ſuch like temptations, but the Apoſtle ſheweth vs, how he ouercame thē all, euen by faith: whoſe nature and propertie is, to relie vpon the commandement and promiſe of God aboue all reaſon, and contrarie vnto it.

But on the otherſide vnbeleefe, which

which is contrarie vnto faith, that reſteth wholly and onely vpon reaſon; in ſo much that vnleſſe they can ſee ſome reaſon, how that may be done, that is ſaide, and promiſed, they will not beleeue it, they thinke it impoſſible, they reiect it as an vnreaſonable thing. A moſt liuely patterne whereof we haue in that great man of Samaria, in the daies of Ahab king of Iſrael: at what time by reaſon of the ſiege of the king of Aram, there was ſuch an extreame famine, that wo-
2. king. 6. 28. men did eate their owne children. Then the prophet Eliſha did propheſie vnto them great plentie on the ſudden, euen the next day following.
chap. 7. 2. To whom this great prince, on whoſe hand the king leaned, anſwered, and ſaid, Though the Lord would make windows in heauen, could this thing come to paſſe? as though he had ſaid, this is impoſſible, though the Lord ſhal raine downe corne from heauen

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among vs? for he could not conceiue by any reaſon, how either the ſiege ſhould be ſo ſuddenly raiſed; or if it were, how it ſhould come to paſſe, that corne beeing ſo vnreaſonably deare to day, it ſhould be ſo exceedingly cheape to morrow. But God verified his owne word vnto them at the time appointed, and this man ſaw it with his eyes, but neuer taſted of it, becauſe of his vnbeleefe. For the king appointed him to be gouernor, and to ſit in the gate of the citie, to ſee the corne ſold to the people, who ſo thronged, that they troad vpon him, and there he died. verſ. 20.

The whole world is full of this vnbeleefe, that they will beleeue no more then their owne reaſon perſwades them vnto: and that that goeth againſt their reaſon they are readie to croſſe it, though it be neuer ſo true. For how many are there, that haue ſet downe with themſelues, that what-

whatsoeuer the Preachers say, they haue determined a course, which they thinke, they haue good reason for: in that they minde to continue, beyond that they will not goe; they are so setled, that out of it, they will not be remooued; they hope they are not now to learne, they are too old to be taught; they trust that they haue not liued so long for nothing; they haue wit and reason as well as other men; and so that that they haue conceiued they will sticke vnto, that course they haue entred into, they purpose to continue in, and in that they minde to liue and die; and this course they hold for doctrine both of faith and manners, for duties to God and to men; and thus they will beleeue none but themselues, and their owne reason.

And thus though they come to the Church from day to day, they come not to learne any thing, they haue

haue determined beforehand what they minde to doe. They will learne of no man, they can teach themselues sufficiently. Whereupon it commeth to passe, that though they daily heare their sinnes rebuked, they will amend nothing; and the iudgements of God denounced against them, they will beleeue nothing: they thinke, they haue better reason for their doings, then any man can haue against them. And if they be called vpon to increase in knowledge and godlines, and so to goe on to perfection; they stand still at a stay, and thinke it not necessarie; they like well of their owne doings, and no man shall remooue them frō them, they will beleeue none but themselues: vnlesse I see reason for it mine owne selfe, I will not beleeue you.

Thus through vnbeleefe the word is choaked in the greatest part of the hearers, as our Sauiour Christ shew-

eth

eth in the parable of the ſeede: and it profiteth them not one whit, no more then it did the Iewes, when it was preached vnto them, becauſe it
Heb.4.2. was not mixed with faith in them that heard it. And ſo that is the very cauſe, why in this long time of preaching, there hath bin ſo little good done, euen the great vnbeleefe that raigneth in men euery where. Of which the Prophet Iſai had too great experience in his time in them to whom he preached, and doth with great griefe complaine of it, when he crieth out thus pathetically, who will beleeue our report? & to whom is the
Iſa.53.1. arme of the Lord reuealed? meaning, that none would beleeue it, but thoſe whoſe hearts God touched by his holy Sprit. And thus by their doings men doe too apparently ſhew, that though they doe not vtter it with their mouthes, yet they ſay it with their hearts, that let men ſay what they

they will, becauſe as they thinke they haue ſome reaſon againſt it, they will beleeue none but themſelues.

Let vs labour to ſee this vnbeleefe in our ſelues in any meaſure, that we haue it, and be ſorie for it, and ſtriue againſt it: and pray God to forgiue vs, and helpe vs. And that we might this way be holpē, let vs not be too much addicted to our reaſon, & meaſure things by it: for our naturall reaſon beeing corrupt, it doth not onely not further vs vnto faith, but doth ſomtimes hinder vs from it; not onely becauſe faith is of things aboue reaſon, but contrary vnto it. Therefore in the matter of our ſaluation we muſt be ſo farre from being addicted to our owne will and reaſon, as that we muſt vtterly deny it, that we might beleeue: as the Apoſtle Saint Thomas ſhould haue done here: & haue ſaid, though this that you tell me be a matter impoſſible in mine vnder-

ſtanding and reaſon, and I cannot poſſibly conceiue how it ſhould be: yet becauſe ſo many of you beeing of conſcience to ſpeake the truth, I beleeue it.

And thus did Abraham concerning the promiſe, which God had
Rom. 4.20. made vnto him: for it is ſaid, that he did not deſpiſe or reaſon againſt the promiſe of God through vnbeleefe: where theſe two are ioyned together as ſubordinate, & come helping one the other, namely, reaſon and vnbeleefe, and not reaſon and faith. So that if we hearken to reaſon, it will cauſe vs to doubt rather then beleeue: and the next way to beleeue, is not to liſten or giue credit vnto the diſputes & doubts that reaſon will miniſter vnto vs. For it is able to obiect many things againſt that that we ſhould beleeue: and therefore if we will be Chriſts diſciples, we muſt denie not onely all our ſinnefull affections that

might draw vs from obeying his doctrine, but our reaſon eſpecially which might diſſwade frō beleeuing it. That when our reaſon ſhall tell vs one thing, as that we may continue in our ſinnes a while longer, we may repent at leiſure, and be ſaued well enough: and that the way to heauen is not ſo ſtraight, as men ſpeake of: and then we ſhall heare the contrarie out of Gods word daily, we muſt beleeue that contrarie to our reaſon, if we will be ſaued. For Thomas remaining in this vnbeleefe, he might haue periſhed for euer, but that Chriſt had mercie on him extraordinarily, and yeilded vnto his vnbeleefe for the good of the Church; that for his ſake, he might ſhew himſelfe vnto his Apoſtles after his reſurection another time.

Therefore firſt of all let vs pray to God to ſanctifie our reaſon, and to inlighten it by his holy ſpirit, that we

may be capable of the myſteries of
Pſal.119.18. word of God: as Dauid doth, Open mine eies, that I may ſee the wonders of thy law. And ſecondly when we come to heare, and read the word of God, let vs bring theſe minds with vs, that what reaſon ſoeuer we ſeemed to haue for our opinions & doings before, when we ſhall heare the contrary auouched by the ſeruants of God, & prooued out of the ſcripture, we giue them ouer & credit them aboue our ſelues. And let vs renounce that reaſon of ours, that ſhall miniſter vnto vs any thing againſt that that hath been taught vs out of the Scripture, and not harken vnto it. For if
Gal. 1. 8. we ſhould hold the Angels of God accurſed, if they deliuer any thing to vs contrary to the written word of God: then much more ſhould we accurſe and denie our owne reaſon, that ſhould ſuggeſt any thing vnto vs contrary to the ſame: and let vs not

after

after ſo long time of preaching be ſtil of this minde, that we will beleeue none but our ſelues.

A Third degree of the vnbeleefe of S. Thomas appeareth in this, that he ſaith, Except I ſee in his hands the print of the nailes, and put my finger into the print of the nailes, and put my hand into his ſide, I will not beleeue it. For, as though it had not bene ſufficient that he had ſayd, that he would beleeue none of them; nor any other that ſhould tell him as much as they did: he would beleeue none but himſelfe: he further addeth, that vnles he might ſee in his hands and feete the print of the nailes, and put in his finger into them, he would not beleeue it. Which is as if he had ſaide, if I may not onely ſee himſelfe, as you ſay you haue done: but may be ſure of it, and therefore may alſo ſee in his body theſe markes, that he had on the croſſe, and eſpecially if I

may come ſo neere vnto him, that I may feele thē, and put my finger into them, I will beleeue it; otherwiſe I will not. So that he will no further beleeue, for all their ſayings then his outward ſenſes ſhall perſwade him; and namely, his ſight and feeling: if I may ſee and feele, I will beleeue, and till then I will not beleeue.

O wonderfull infidelitie: eſpecially in one that was ſo neere Chriſt, and had beene ſo long time conuerſant with him. For what if Chriſt had neuer appeared vnto him, nor vnto any other of the Apoſtles? was it not ſufficient vnto them, that he had often before in their hearing ſaide; that he ſhould be put to death, and the third day riſe againe: And that they were charged to ſhew no man that viſion which they ſaw vpon the mountaine, vntill he was riſen againe from the dead: and after I am riſen

Matth. 16. 21. Chap. 17. 9. and 26. 32.

againe, I will goe before you into Galile. Should they not haue beene left without excuſe in their vnbeleefe? Seeing they had heard it from his owne mouth ſo often before his death: and now after his reſurrection diuers credible women did tell them that they had ſeene him riſen againe, according as he had often told them.

Beſides, if he were of that minde, and thought that he had good reaſon for it, that he would not beleeue, vnles he did thus ſee & feele him: why may not other be of the ſame minde too? and ſo Chriſt ſhould haue remained vpon the earth vnto this day, and not haue aſcended into heauen: or els often ſince he ſhould haue deſcended to ſhew himſelfe to thoſe that ſhould beleeue: if none would beleeue further then they ſhould ſee and feele. Moreouer after that he had thus ſeen him and felt him himſelfe, would he not haue thought it ſtrange, if others

would not haue beleeued him, when he preached vnto thē the reſurrection of Chriſt? why then doth he make ſuch a ſtraight rule to himſelfe?

Surely that in him we might ſee a patterne of that great weaknes that is in vs, and how full of vnbeleefe we be: and a liuely example of the great mercie of Chriſt in bearing with ſinners in the ſame: and by all meanes putting them out of the ſame in time, that they might be ſaued.

And why doth he ſay thus rather then any thing elſe, Except I may ſee and feele, &c. Are theſe two ſenſes ſuch ſure iudges of the truth, that they cannot be deceiued? May not a man thinke, that he ſeeth and feeleth that, which he doth not? and may he not againe doubt, whether he ſeeeth and feeleth that, which indeede he doth? How came it to paſſe that when Eliſha had cauſed water to come miraculouſly into a vally of the wil-

wildernes, for the Kings of Iſrael, of Iudah, and of Edom, that the Moabites when as earely in the morning the ſunne roſe vpon the water, and they ſaw the water as redde as blood ouer againſt them; they ſaid, This is blood: the kings are ſurely ſlaine, and one hath ſmitten an other: but when they came to the hoſt of Iſrael they found it otherwiſe. And as the ſight of theſe men deceiued them, ſo did the feeling of Iſaac deceiue him in his old age. For his ſonne Iaakob comming vnto him in the perſon and habite of his elder brother Eſau to receiue the bleſſing: when he felt the roughnes of his necke and hands, which Rebekah had couered with skinnes, he iudged by his feeling that it was Eſau. For he ſaid, Come neere my ſonne, that I may feele thee, whether thou be my ſonne Eſau or no; & when he had felt him he ſaid, The hands are the hands of Eſau.

Thus

Thus wee ſee that ſight and feeling may eaſily be deceiued: and yet this is the nature of vnbeleefe, to giue credit more vnto theſe deceiueable ſenſes, then to many other things, that are moſt ſure and certaine. And many men in matters of faith will almoſt beleeue nothing, vntill ſuch time, as they ſee and feele them: and therefore when they are taught what in heauen is prepared for them that ſerue God; what in hell for them that diſobey him: they are readie to ſay, who hath ſeen them? giuing vs to vnderſtand, that they will not beleeue them, vntill they either ſee them, or feele them themſelues. Was not this vnbeleefe vniuerſally ſpread ouer the face of the whole world before the flood, when Noah the preacher of righteoſnes declared vnto thē the iudgment of God, that ſhould come vpon them for their ſinnes; & namly, that God would bring a flood

of

of waters vpō the earth to deſtroy all fleſh wherin was the breath of life vnder the heauen, becauſe all fleſh had corrupted his way, and the earth was filled with cruelty; and thus he continued preaching an hūdred & twentie yeares: But none of them beleeued it though they ſaw him alſo all this while preparing the Arke for the ſauing of himſelfe and his family. And therefore they continued ſtill in their impenitencie, and in their ſinnes, till the flood came and tooke them all away. And ſo they ſaid to Noah, ſome in their thoghts, ſome in their words, as Thomas did here in an other caſe to the Apoſtles: You ſay that the world ſhalbe drowned, but except we ſee the raine come in ſuch meaſure, and feele it, we will not beleeue it.

And was not the like infidelity afterwards in all the men of Sodom where iuſt Lot liued, and was vexed with their vncleanely conuerſation: for which

which he denounced Gods iudgemẽt againſt them: and at the laſt by ſpeciall reuelation of the Angels that were ſent vnto them, he ſaide vnto his ſonnes in law which had maried his daughters, Ariſe, go out of this place, for the Lord wil deſtroy this citie; but he ſeemed to his ſonnes in law as though he had mocked. Thus they would not beleeue it, becauſe they ſaw it not, nor any likelihood of it, till fire and brimſtone came downe from heauen, and fell vpon them, and conſumed them. And ſo they being condemned, and the citie ouerthrowne, they were made an example vnto them that after ſhould liue vngodly, and which would not beleeue the truth of Gods iudgements againſt ſinne in the mouthes of his ſeruants any further then they ſhall ſee and feele themſelues.

Thus we ſee how common this is among all vnbeleeuers, ſo farre as infide-

fidelitie preuaileth with them, that they will beleeue nothing that is threatned againſt ſinne any further, then they ſee and feele it themſelues. When in the famin of Samaria there was exceeding great plentie againſt the next day promiſed by Eliſha the Prophet, did not one of the Princes ſay; when I ſee it, I will beleeue it, and not before. Whereupon this anſwere was giuen vnto him, Beholde, thou ſhalt ſee it with thine eies, but thou ſhalt not eate thereof. And ſo vnbeleefe diſcredits not only the threatnings, but the promiſes, except they can ſee them with their eies, and feele them with their hands: of which we ſhall ſpeake more afterwards.

Doth not S. Peter ſay, that there ſhal come mockers in theſe laſt daies, which will walke after their luſt, and ſay, where is the promiſe of his comming? for ſince the fathers died, all things

things continue alike frō the beginning of the creation. Wherein he ſheweth how men through vnbeleef will make a mocke of Chriſts ſecond comming,& of the end of the world, and of the day of iudgement: becauſe with their eyes they doe not ſee any ſuch thing likely to come to paſſe: when they ſhall ſee ſome great alteration in heauen & in earth bending that way, they will beleeue it, and no ſooner, nor any further.

And we finde by experience the truth of this daily in many,that they will beleeue nothing of this matter any further, then they can ſee themſelues. And our Sauiour Chriſt in the Goſpel hath foretold, and forewarned vs of this, when as he ſaith: As
Luk.17.26. it was in the dayes of Noah, ſo ſhall it be in the dayes of the ſonne of man: they eate, they dranke, they bought, they ſolde, they married wiues,and gaue in marriage,vnto the day

day that Noah went into the Arke, and the flood came and deſtroyed them all.

Likewiſe alſo, as it was in the daies of Lot, they eate, they dranke, they planted, they built: but in the day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimſtone from heauen, and deſtroyed them all: after theſe inſamples ſhall it be, when the ſonne of man ſhall be reuealed: that is, not onely it ſhall come ſuddenly and all things ſhall continue in their ordinarie courſe: but men ſhall then giue themſelues to all pleaſure and worldlines: and ſhall neither beleeue it, nor thinke of it, till it come: as the men of the old world did not: of whome the Euangeliſt S. Matthew ſaith, that they knew nothing, till the flood came and tooke them all away: ſo ſhal alſo the comming of the ſonne of man be. They knew nothing, not that they had not heard of it, for Noah did

preach

preach vnto them an 120. yeares before: but they did not beleeue it, nor regard it, because they saw it not: euen so shall it be towards the end of the world: though they haue heard of these things an hundred times, yet they wil know nothing til they see it.

And not onely this sinne raigneth in the wicked, that they will beleeue no more of the promises and threatnings; of the ioyes of heauen, & pains of hell, then they can see & feele thē-selues: and so because they do neither of them yet, they will beleeue none of them; let men say what they will, and neuer so long: and so they goe on in their sinnes, and liue thereafter: which is greatly to be lamented. But also if we will examine our selues, & other men, we shall finde, that this was in our selues, and in them, till the Lord had mercie vpon vs. That though we had often heard that God was iust, and would punish sinne, yet

we

we presumed otherwise, and did not beleeue it, because we escaped a while in our sinnes, and did not see and feele the truth of it in our selues: and by that meanes went on, and were hardened in our sinnes. And so that was verified in vs, as well as in others, which the Lord complaineth of by his Prophet; These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue: therefore thou thoughtest that I was like thee: but I will reproue thee, and set them in order before thee. Psal. 50. 21.

And thus not only before our calling, infidelity did wholly beare the sway in us: but also since that time a great remnant of it still remaineth in vs: so that in many things we will beleeue no further, then we see and feele, especially in the time of temptation: for if we be in any great trouble, and then if there be a messenger of God sent vnto vs, or an interpreter of his word, one of a thousand, as Elihu Iob.

lihu calleth him: who shal bid vs be of good comfort, and put our trust in God, he will helpe vs and deliuer vs in his good time: and declare vnto vs many promises of his word; to that ende. We then, if wee want meanes to help ourselues, we are ready to say, O but I see not how, and which way that should be. So that if we did presently vse the promised helpe that we might feele it, or had means to bring it to passe, that we might see it, we say, we wold beleeue it, orels not. So our faith goeth no further to comfort vs, then our senses of seeing and feeling. And this is too true, in what affliction soeuer we be, either of pouerlie, sickneesse, or any other distresse.

And this vnbeleefe of ours is so much the more dangerous and the more deepely rooted in vs, because though we have had experience of Gods goodnes towards ourselues in

time

time past, wherein we may remember how he hath holpen and deliuered vs beyond all that we could foresee, or haue any hope of: yet at another time we trust him and his worde, no further then we can see our selues. Thus the people of Israel doubted of the power of God, whether he would giue them flesh in the wildernes according to their desire, though they had seene his power before in giuing the water out of the hard rock: whereof Dauid speaketh after this manner, They temped God in their hearts, in requiring meate for their lust: they spake against God also, saying, Can God prepare a table in the wildernes? Behold, he smote the rocke, that the water gushed out, and the streames ouerflowed: can he giue bread also? or prepare flesh for his people? Where he aggrauateth their sinne of infidelitie, in that they seeing before how he beyond all hope brought Psal. 78. 18.

water plentifully out of the rocke to ſatisfie their want, they did now doubt that they ſhould haue no fleſh, though Moſes had promiſed it vnto them from God, becauſe they could not ſee how in the wildernes ſuch aboundance ſhould be prepared for ſo great a people, that euery one might haue enough.

And we our ſelues are ſubiect to the like, not onely in theſe outward things, and are therein too much miſlead, becauſe we relie wholly vpon our outward ſenſes: but alſo in the matter of our ſaluation, therein our vnbeleefe doth eſpecially ſhew it ſelfe, ſo that we can hardly or not at all beleeue any thing beyonde our ſenſe and feeling. For when we are humbled vnder the weighty hand of God with the ſight of our corruption and ſinnes, and haue the feeling of Gods wrath vpon vs for them in any meaſure: thē though we heare

the cõfortable promiſes of the goſpel made to all that vnfainedly turne frõ them: As there is no condemnation to them, that are in Chriſt Ieſus, which walke not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit. And if you will inwardly walke and make your ſelues cleane from them, and take away the euill of your works from before your eies; ceaſe to doe euil, & learne to doe good: though your ſinnes were as crimſon, they ſhall be made white as ſnow: though they were red as ſcarlet, they ſhalbe as white as wooll: that is, if you leaue thẽ, I am readie to forgiue them, though they be neuer ſo many: and then we find by the grace of God, that we vtterly deteſt them, and are weary of them, as of an importable burden, & haue caſt them away from vs, as a filthie cloath: yet becauſe we ſee not the light of Gods countenance ſhining clearly vpon vs, and haue not the feeling of his loue

Rom. 8. 1.

Eſa. 1. 16.

powred into our hearts, wee cannot beleeue the pardon of them, as wee ought. And vnto all the promises, that are brought for our comfort, we are ready to obiect: alas, we haue no feeling of that, that is said vnto vs. Which is as if we should thus speak; you say thus and thus vnto me, but I can haue no comfort in it: for vnles I see it, and feele it, I will not beleeue it. Which vnbeleefe though it be very great, yet Christ Iesus doth beare with them a while in it, and helpe them of it in due season, as he did his seruant Thomas the Apostle here.

And truly as the Deuill did by Gods permission thus farre preuaile with the Apostle S. Thomas that he was brought to this straight, that without sight and feeling he would not beleeue: So with this one temptation of his he hath so mightily preuailed against many of the best

seruants

ſeruants of god, that he hath brought them to a very low ebbe, euen almoſt to their wits ende. For beſides that he hath driuen them to this extremitie, which is very great, that they wil beleeue no more of Gods fauour towards them, then they can ſee and feele in themſelues: he hath gained this alſo at their hãds, which is much more: that becauſe they haue no feeling, therefore they ſay they haue no faith: as though theſe two were both one, feeling and faith; or as though they were alwaies neceſſarily ioyned together.

And hereupon haue come the great complaints and outeries, which ſome of them haue made againſt thẽſelues, in the time of their trouble: and not onely of thoſe, who haue groſly & apparantly fallen into ſome ſinne, and therefore there was ſome manifeſt cauſe of it: but of thoſe alſo which haue liued blamelesly, neither

haue beene tainted with any great ſinne: And yet both of them in the time of their temptation haue vttered many bitter words againſt thẽſelues; as that they are altogether out of the fauour of God; that they are not in the number of them that ſhall be ſaued; they haue no part in Chriſt; they are none of Gods children, and ſuch like. And why ſo? for ſay they, they haue no ſight and feeling of the fauour of God in themſelues, and therefore they haue no faith, neither can haue: for except they haue ſome feeling in their hearts, they cannot beleeue.

And this temptation hath lien vpon the conſcience of ſome more heauily, and of others leſſe: vpon ſome longer, vpon others ſhorter time: euen as it hath pleaſed the Lord either in wiſdome to trie the one, or in mercie to ſuccour the other. This was that that did ſo oppreſſe Dauid,

as

as appeareth in many Pſalmes, that he was almoſt in deſpaire of himſelfe: when he ſaid, How long wilt thou forget me for euer? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? and will the Lord abſent himſelfe for euer? and will he ſhew no more fauour? is his mercie cleane gone for euer? and doth his promiſe faile for euermore? hath God forgotten to be mercifull? and hath he ſhut vp his tender mercy in diſpleaſure: and, My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me? and art ſo farre from my health, and from the voice of my roaring? I crie by day, but thou heareſt not: and by night, but haue no audience. And thus he continued, till it pleaſed God for our inſtruction and comfort to giue him victorie; partly by conſidering the former mercifull dealing of God towards himſelfe and others; partly by meditating vpon the conſtant truth of his promiſes, which made him at the

Pſal. 13. 1. and 77. 7. and 22. 1.

the laſt truſt vnto him, and depend vpon him without any preſent helpe or feeling. And thus he endeth the 38. Pſalme, which he made to put himſelfe in remembrance of ſome great affliction of God, that was vpon him, and therefore intitles it a Pſal. 38. *Pſalme of remembrance:* in which are many grieuous complaints both of his ſinnes, and of the puniſhment of them, without any feeling of preſent helpe and comfort; onely he ſaith, verſ. 15. that he would waite vpon God, hoping that he would ſhew himſelfe fauourable in time, though he had no preſent feeling of it. And ſo muſt we doe in the like caſe. But in the meane ſeaſon we ſee, that this meaſure of vnbeleefe, that was in the Apoſtle S. Thomas, that he would beleeue no more, then he could ſee and feele, is and hath beene in others alſo, and that all of vs are ſubiect vnto it more or leſſe.

But

But that we may arme our ſelues ſufficiently againſt this grieuous temptation, and comfortably ſupport our ſelues, when we ſhall fall into it; we muſt conſider that faith and feeling are not onely not all one, nor alwaies ioyned together: but alſo that they are many times ſeuered in the childrē of God: ſo that there is faith, where there is not, nor cā be any preſēt feeling: yea, that the greateſt faith ſometimes is, where there is no feeling at all. And to this ende we muſt remember, what the Apoſtle ſaith of the nature of faith, It is the ground of things which are hoped for, and the euidence of things, which are not ſeene. Where he ſaith, that faith is of ſuch things, as we ſee not, and of thoſe things which are but hoped for, and we as yet haue not the preſent poſſeſſion and feeling of them, and yet we beleeue them. And this he prooueth by moſt excellent examples,

amples, when as first of all he addeth,
verſ. 3. Through faith we vnderſtand, that the world was ordained by the word of God: ſo that the things which we ſee are not made of things which did appeare: that is, we know by faith, that the whole world was made of nothing, and this verely we beleeue: but who did, or euer could ſee this? Therefore we doe, and muſt beleeue that which we haue not, neither can ſee: & ſo we haue the knowledge of it by faith, and not by ſight.

verſ. 7. Secondarily, he thus ſpeaketh there of the faith of Noah: that he beeing warned of God of the things, which were as yet not ſeene, mooued with reuerence prepared the Arke to the ſauing of his houſhold. Where two things are noted, that he beleued that which he could not ſee: 1. that all the world ſhould be drowned for their ſinnes: 2. that by repentance and faith himſelfe had foũd fauour with god, & ſhould be ſaued in the waters: & ther-

fore he made the Arke according to Gods cõmandement long before he ſaw the flood, or any tokẽ of it, that he might be ſaued in it. And ſo he beleeued the iudgement of God to come vpon the wicked, and ſaluation promiſed himſelfe, though he could not ſee, nor haue any preſent feeling of either of thẽ. And this is that operation of faith which it muſt haue in vs; euen to cauſe vs to beleeue both the threatnings of gods iudgmẽts against impenitẽt ſinners, & the promiſe of ſaluation to thẽ that walk before him in truth, though we haue no preſent ſight or feeling either of the one, or of the other. For we muſt conſider the conſtant truth of Gods word, both in his iuſtice and mercie, which in time ſhall be verified, though for the preſent there be no viſible ſignes and tokens thereof to be ſeene or felt of our ſelues, or any other.

The third example is of Sarah the mother of vs all: of whome it is ſaid,

verſ. 11. that through faith ſhee receiued ſtrength to conceiue ſeede, and was deliuered of a child, when ſhee was paſt age, becauſe ſhee iudged him faithfull which had promiſed. When a man child was firſt promiſed vnto her, beeing both old and barren; as long as ſhee meaſured things by ſight and feeling, ſhee beleeued not this, Gen. 18. 11. neither could: For ſhee ſaw, that it ceaſed to be with her after the manner of women, therefore ſhee laughed within her ſelfe, as at a thing impoſſible: for which ſhee was reproued with theſe words, Shall any thing be hard to the Lord? But when ſhee gaue ouer conſulting with reaſon, ſhee beleeued not onely without, but cleane contrarie to all ſenſe and feeling: for ſhee looked onely to this, that he was iuſt and true, who had promiſed it vnto her: and by this faith was made fruitfull. So in matters of faith we muſt not looke what

what we see and feele in ourselves, or in any meanes to effect them; but what God hath promised, and how faithfull he is to performe.

And so did Abraham, of whome it is written, that the Lord brought him forth, and saide, Looke vp now to heauen, and tell the starres, if thou be able to number them: and he said vnto him, So shall thy seede be: and Abraham beleeued the Lord, And the Apostle commendeth this faith in him so much the more, because he considered not his own body, which was now dead; (that is, voide of strength and vigour to get children) beeing almost an hundred yeare old: neither the deadnes of Saras wombe, who was both aged, and barren. Both which if he had looked vnto, he could have had no sight or feeling of that, that was promised: for they were directly against it. But he gave this glorie to God, that he was fully assu-

Gen. 15. 5.

Rom. 4. 1.

vers. 20

red

red, that he that had promifed it, was able to doe it: and so above hope, he beleeued vnder hope, that he fhould be the father of many nations, according to that which was fpoken vnto him, So shall thy feede be. And fo he beleeued that, which he neither had, nor could have any prefent fight, or feeling of.

Thus both Abraham and Sarah beleeued that, which they could have no feeling of in themfelves: and so muft all the fonnes of Abraham, and daughters of Sarah. And thus to doe is not onely faith, but the greatest faith. For if they could have feen how this might have beene done: and have felt fuch ſtrēgth in their bodies, that they might perceiue it very likely by the courfe of nature; then it had beene no great matter to beleeue it: nay it had been great infidelitie not to beleeue it. So for vs to beleeue the promifes of God when we may see and

and feele, how they may be performed, that is a matter of no moment: but when all things go against them, & we haue no sight or feeling at all in our selues, of that that is said vnto vs: then to beleeue God, and to giue this glory vnto him, that he is able to performe it, is a matter of great faith. And therefore here it is said of Abraham, not onely that he beleeued, but that he was not weake in faith: that is, very strong and constant in faith. So that the Spirit of God commendeth this in him, as an high degree of faith, that he beleeued without sight or feeling: to shew vs that faith is so many times seuered from feeling, that it is thē the strongest, when we constantly beleeue that, which we neither see, nor feele, but waite vpon God for them both. verſ. 19.

And this is that, which was in our Sauiour Christ also: who though he did alwaies put his trust in his father,

and was ſure that he loued him: and his faith this way was as pretious and pure as gold: yet it did moſt of all ſhew it ſelfe in his full ſtrength, when he came to ſuffer vpon the croſſe: when it was ſo many waies aſſaulted, that contrary to all ſenſe and feeling he remained conſtant, and ſo ouercame: to ſuccour all thoſe, that ſhall be oppreſſed with the temptations of vnbeleefe, becauſe they haue no feeling. For when things did lie ſo heauie vpon him, he beeing then to beare all our ſinnes and corruptions, and in them to appeare before God his father, and to anſwer for them; yea, to ſatisfie his wrath by induring the full puniſhment of them: firſt of all it is written of him, that he began
Math.26.37. to waxe ſorowfull, and grieuouſly troubled in his minde: and this griefe was ſo deadly, that he was not able to containe it in himſelfe, but did bewray it with moſt lamentable words

vnto

vnto his Disciples; that he might haue comfort from them; saying, My soule is very heauie vnto the death, tarie ye here, and watch with me: and then because his grief was not asswaged; he fell vpon his face downe to the ground, and praied, saying, O my father, if it be possible, let this cuppe passe from me. And thus he praied the second and third time. And that it might appeare, what vncomfortable striuing he had in himselfe all this while, not onely with death; but with the fearefull iudgement of his angrie father; it is further added, that he fell into a great agonie, and distraction of minde, whereby all his bodie was distempered, so that for anguish his sweate was like drops of blood trickling downe to the cold ground. verſ. 38. 39. Luk. 22. 44.

And at the last when he was vpon the crosse, he was further assaulted with temptations from the speeches of men, euen his enemies, which re-

Math.27.39. uiled him, wagging their heads, and
casting out many opprobrious spee-
40. ches against him, saying, If thou be
the sonne of God, come downe from
the crosse: he trusted in God, let him
deliuer him, if he will haue him: for
he saide, I am the sonne of God.
Whereby his discomforts and dis-
couragements for our sakes, were so
increased, that at the last he brast
forth into these most lamentable
46. words, and as the Euangelist saith,
straining as it were all the parts of his
bodie, and powers of his spirit, hee
cried with a loud voice; My God, my
God, why hast thou forsaken me? All
this while what present sight and fee-
ling could he haue of Gods fauour?
when as not onely all things out-
wardly did shew, but his words also
did abundantly declare, that inwardly
he felt the contrarie.

Therefore his faith was now the
greatest, as it was meete it should be,

to

to incounter and ouercome ſo many and great temptations: when as contrarie to all theſe things, which he ſaw and felt, he not only praied moſt earneſtly vnto his father, and continued therein, praying three times the ſame words, with ſuch feruencie of ſpirit, that beeing vpon the cold ground, he ſweat water and blood: and he praied in faith; For when he did offer vp thoſe praiers and ſupplications with ſtrong crying and teares vnto him, that was able to ſaue him frō death, he was heard in the thing which he feared; and God ſent an Angel vnto him from heauen to comfort him. Whereby he came to this reſolution of minde, that he quietly ſubmitted himſelfe in theſe his ſufferings vnto the will of his father; ſaying, Abba, father, all things are poſſible vnto thee: take away this cup from me: neuertheleſſe, not that I will, but that thou wilt be done. And

H.b.5.7.

Luk.22.43.

Mark.14.36.

beeing now at the point of death, & in the middeſt of all his ſufferings, and in the height of his temptations, that it might appeare that he had o-
Luk.23.46. uercome all, he cried out with a loud voice, ſtraining himſelfe to the vttermoſt, when life was almoſt out of his weake and painfull bodie, Father, into thine hands I commend my ſpirit; and when he thus had ſaide, he gaue vp the ghoſt, & quietly died. Which wordes of his beeing vttered with great zeale, did ſhew the excellencie and perfection of his faith; eſpecially if we conſider in what caſe he was then: and ſo his faith was the greateſt, when he had the leaſt feeling.

And thus no doubt the ſeruants of God in their ſeuerall afflictions of body and mind, and otherwiſe are in meaſure made like vnto Chriſt: whē as hauing nothing, that by any ſight or feeling, inward or outward, might miniſter vnto thē any cōfort,

and

and therefore in ſuch caſes they are greatly diſcouraged and caſt downe in themſelues; yet they holde out conſtantly in them to the end: then the more like they are vnto Chriſt in his ſufferings, the more like ſhall they be vnto him in his glory. For then is their faith the greateſt, when in this forlone eſtate of theirs (as it may ſeeme) they can pray vnto God as Chriſt did, and ſeeke for all helpe and comfort from him: and neuer leaue praying till God heare them, as Chriſt continued in his prayer, till an Angel was ſent vnto him. And in the meane time whatſoeuer becomes of them, they with a quiet and meeke ſpirit reſigne vp themſelues wholly to his bleſſed will, being contented whatſoeuer they deſire, that not their owne, but Gods will may take place: as Chriſt did, when he ſaid, Father not mine, but thy will be done.

And if they doe ſo, that that affli-

ction preſent, of what nature and kind ſoeuer, ſhall make an end of thē, they can quietly and peaceably commend their ſoules and bodies, euen themſelues wholly liuing and dying into his bleſſed hands; as Chriſt did alſo vpon the croſſe, when he was readie to giue vp the ghoſt: beeing perſwaded, that nothing euer periſhed that was commited vnto his cuſtodie: according as he ſaith himſelfe, Ioh.17.12. Thoſe that thou gaueſt me, haue I kept, and none of them is loſt, but the child of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled. If we can thus doe, though all this while we haue no feeling of any preſent comfort, yet it may be truly ſaid vnto vs as it was to the woman of Canaan, who with many diſcouragements, and without all ſight or feeling of any fauour frō him, purſued our Sauiour Chriſt with her prayers, and would not giue ouer, or take any repulſe, O woman,

great

great is thy faith: and, O man, great is thy faith, that doest thus, whosoeuer thou art. Math. 15. 28.

And we haue a worthy example of the truth of this in one of the Martyrs, of our owne country, and in the memory of mã, as it is largely set out by M. Foxe in his laborious worke of the Acts and Monuments of the Church. The effect of which storie shortly is this: M. Robert Glouer of Couentry gentl. and Master of Artes in Cambridge, was in the raigne of Q. Mary, with many the seruants of God by the malicious practises of the Papists apprehended, & brought before the Bishop of the Diocesse for his faith and religion, and after examination he was sent to prison: where he receiued great comfort from the Lord from time to time; & as his afflictions did increase, so did the comforts of the Lord abound; till at the last by the permission of God,

for

for his further triall and comfort, the Deuill did greatly assault him in prison by the consideration of his vnworthines to be counted in the number of those, that should suffer for Christs sake: which temptation of the enemie, though he did constantly resist at the first; yet after that he was condemned to death by the Bishop, and was at the point to be deliuered out of this world, it so happened, that two or three daies before the time of his burning, his heart being lumpish, and destitute of all spirituall consolation, and feeling of gods fauour, he felt in himselfe no aptnes or willingnes, but rather an heauines and dulnes of spirit, full of much discomfort to beare that bitter crosse of Martyrdome, readie now to be laid vpon him.

Whereupon he fearing himselfe, least the Lord had vtterly withdrawn his woonted fauour from him, made his

his moane to one M. Auſten Bernher a miniſter, & a familiar friend of his: ſignifying vnto him, how earneſtly he had praied day and night vnto the Lord, and yet could receiue no motion, nor ſenſe of any comfort from him. Vnto whome the ſaid Auſten anſwering againe, willed and deſired him patiently to wait the Lords pleaſure, and howſoeuer his preſent feeling was, yet ſeeing his cauſe was iuſt and true, he exhorted him conſtantly to ſticke to the ſame, and play the man: nothing miſdoubting, but the Lord in time would viſit him, and ſatisfie his deſire with plentie of conſolation. Whereof (he ſaide) he was right certen and ſure, and therefore deſired him, whenſoeuer any ſuch feeling of Gods heauenly mercies ſhould begin to touch his heart, that then he would ſhew ſome ſignification thereof, whereby he might witneſſe with him the ſame: and ſo depar-

departed from him.

The next day, when the time came of his martyrdome, as he was going to the place, and was now come to the ſight of the ſtake: although all the night before praying earneſtly to God for ſtrength and courage, hee could finde none, neither had any ſight or taſte of the fauour of God in himſelfe, ſodenly he was ſo mightily repleniſhed with Gods holy comfort, & heauenly ioyes, that he could not ſmother it in himſelfe, but cried out clapping his hands to Auſten, and ſaying on this wiſe, Auſten, he is come, he is come, &c. and that with ſuch ioy and alacritie, as one ſeeming rather to be riſen from ſome deadly daunger, to libertie of life, then one paſſing out of this world by any pains of death. Here we ſee that great was his faith, when he was willing to giue his bodie to be burnt for the teſtimonie of Chriſt, and was now going to

the

the ſtake to that ende, though he had no feeling of Gods fauour then by any ioyes that he felt in himſelfe. He could neuer haue ſuffered thus for the truth, if he had no faith: if then he had died in this caſe without the ſenſe of any ſpeciall comfort, he muſt needs haue died in the faith of Chriſt for which he did ſuffer: and ſo hee ſhould haue had faith, yea very great faith, not onely liuing, but dying without any ſenſe or feeling.

But I will come vnto an other example, which though it be far more ancient in time, yet is better knowne vnto vs, as being recorded in the holy Scripture. The patience of Iob as it is ſet downe as a patterne, and cõmended to all men to follow, ſo none can doubt of his faith alſo, but that it was very great: when he is thus nũbred among the faithfulleſt men that haue liued vpon the face of the earth. Whẽ the land ſinneth againſt me by com-

committing a treſpaſe, then will I
Ezec. 14. 13. ſtreech out mine hand vpon it, and though theſe three men, Noah, Daniel, and Iob were among them, they ſhould deliuer but their owne ſoules by their righteouſneſſe, ſaith the Lord God. When all that miſery came vpō him, that we read of in the Scripture: as that in one day he loſt
Iob 1.3. ſeauen thouſand ſheepe, three thouſand camels, fiue hundred yoake of oxen, fiue hundred ſhee aſſes: and all his ſonnes and daughters died a violent death after a ſtrange manner; and in his owne bodie he was ſmitten with ſore boiles frō the ſole of his foote, vnto the crowne of his head. And he beeing in this pitifull caſe, all friends did forſake him; yea they that
ch. 30 1. were younger then he did mocke him, and they whoſe fathers he refuſed to ſet with the dogs of his flockes.
ch. 19. 16. And his men ſeruants & maids tooke him as a ſtraunger, and though he cal-

called them, they would not answer him; though he prayed them with his mouth: & his breath was strange vnto his wife, though he prayed her for the childrens sake of her owne body. And three of his principall friends did set themselues against him, & by their reasoning did greatly discourage him, as though he had beene an hypocrite all the daies of his life, and that his holines of life was but in shew, and not in truth. And he had no rest neither night nor day, for when he laid himselfe down, he saide, When shall I arise: and so ch.7.4. measuring the euening, he was weary with tossing too & fro, vnto the dawning of the day. Neither was he quiet waking nor sleeping: for when he said, my couch shall releeue me, and 13. my bed shall bring comfort in my meditation, the lord feared him with dreames, and astonied him with visions.

Now

Now when all theſe things came vpon him at once, whereby his eſtate was more miſerable, then I haue expreſſed, or you are able to conceiue, what ſenſe and feeling could he poſſibly haue of Gods fauour, either inward or outward, when all things thus went againſt him? yet now his faith was at the higheſt, and did ſhew it ſelfe in the greateſt meaſure, when he vttered this moſt excellent ſaying,
ch.13.15. Loe, though he kill me, yet will I truſt in him. So that he would not giue ouer his truſt and confidence in Gods goodnes, though he ſhould proceed further againſt him vnto death. And moſt of all when he further addeth,
& 19.25. I am ſure, that my Redeemer liueth, and he ſhal ſtand the laſt on the earth; and though after my skinne wormes deſtroy this bodie, yet I ſhall ſee God in my fleſh: whome I my ſelfe ſhall ſee, and mine eyes ſhall behold, and none other for me, though my raines

are

are consumed within me. So that though he died in that case without all outward comfort, or inward feeling, yet hee would put his trust in God: hauing the testimony of a good conscience, and relying vpon the promise of God made concerning the resurrection of his bodie, and life euerlasting in the world to come.

Thus then we ought to be so farre from beeing discouraged in our selues for want of the sight and feeling of inward comforts, as though therefore wee had no faith; as that when they shall be altogether taken from vs for a while, though very long, and many yeares: yet if we can then hold out in a godly life, and not giue ouer a good conscience, as Iob did; and if we still call vpon the name of God, and stay vpon his promises in life and death, though we doe not yet inioy them: all the world shall then witnesse for vs, that our faith is

exceeding great, though wee our ſelues be not able to ſee it, neither can be perſwaded of it. For as when the ſunne ſhineth moſt clearely, and men doe ſee the brightnes of it, and doe feele the ſcortching heate of it, then it is an eaſie matter to beleeue, and to ſay confidently, there is a ſunne in the firmament: euen children and thoſe that are of meane capacitie, are able to ſay ſo, and doe beleeue as much, and haue ſuch a full perſwaſion of it, that if all the world ſhould tell them the contrary, they would not beleeue them, neither could they poſſibly doubt of it, their ſight & feeling did ſufficiently inſtruct them. But when the cloudes ſhall couer it, or in the night both the light and heat thereof ſhall be taken away; then to be fully perſwaded, that the ſunne is ſtill in the heauens, and that it hath loſt nothing of the light and heate of it; that is a matter of a deeper conceit, and more

more experience.

Euen ſo when the teſtimonies of Gods fauour and loue are ſo many & great, and ſo plentifully vpon vs, both outwardly and inwardly, that they may eaſily be ſeene and felt; then to beleeue, that God is gratious vnto vs, and to be perſwaded of his fauour towards vs, is that which the weakeſt in faith may attaine vnto without any difficultie: But when all theſe ſhall be taken away, not onely in our owne iudgement, but in the opinion alſo of others, and the light of Gods coũtenance ſhall be, as it were, darkned with the cloudes of aduerſitie, and all things outwardly ſhall be as vncomfortable vnto vs, as the darkeſt night of winter; yet then to beleeue, that God is one and the ſame towards vs, and that his loue ſuffereth no eclypſe at all, but is the ſame ſtill to vs, and to all thoſe that are his, becauſe whome he once loueth, he loueth vnto the

Rom.11.29. ende, and that the gifts and calling of God are without repentance: & that
Pſal.25.10. all the paths of the Lord are mercie and truth, vnto thoſe that keepe his couenant, and his teſtimonies; that is, that he is not onely mercifull vnto them in the beginning, but alſo true and conſtant in his mercies towards all his euen vnto the ending, to finiſh and make perfect in them that good worke of his, that he hath begunne in
1.Sam.15.29. them. For he is not like vnto man that hee ſhould repent him of any thing, that he hath done: and as S.
Iam.1.17. Iames ſaith, with him there is no variablenes, or ſhadow of turning. To be, I ſay, thus perſwaded, when theſe things ſhall be vpon vs, and ſo to reſt in the truth of Gods promiſes, and to waite patiently for a comfortable feeling of the performance of them in our ſelues, is a matter of greater faith, and of longer experience.

Againe, as if a man doth come into

to a fruitfull garden or orchyard, well ſet with many trees in the ſpring time, when all things are greene and bloſſome, or in ſommer, when the trees are full of fruit; it is the eaſieſt thing in the world then euen at the firſt ſight to be perſwaded, that the trees are liuing and growing: and he that hath the weakeſt ſenſes, & meaneſt wit, and leaſt experience, is able to ſay ſo: But to come thether in the depth of winter, when all the fruit ſhall be gathered, and the leaues fallen, and ſee all the bowes, white with the whore froſt, and rine hanging vpon euery twigge, ſo that outwardly they ſeeme to be dead and rotten; yet then to be perſwaded, that they are liuing, and that the ſappe is at the roote, which in time will come into all the branches againe, and ſhew it ſelf, as before, in putting forth leaues, bloſſomes, and fruit: this requireth better iudgement, & more experiēce.

So is it in the matter of faith: when all the testimonies of Gods loue doe abundantly shew themselues, as it were in somer, it is an easie matter to beleeue: but when all these shall be fallen away from vs, as they were frō *Iob*; and there is a very hard & long winter ful of many stormes come vpon vs; yet then not to be too much discouraged & cast downe, as though all were cleane lost and gone: but to be perswaded, that the fauour of God is not cleane dried vp, but is at the roote, that is, is the same in Christ towards vs, that euer it was; and that, as the Apostle saith, Iesus Christ is yesterday, and to day, and will be the same for euer: and that the light of Gods countenance is not cleane put out, but darkned, and couered with a vaile for a time: and so with a quiet and meeke spirit to waite vpon God in all well doing, till there be a new spring, and till the sunne breake out

Heb. 13. 6.

of

of the clouds againe. Thus to doe, is that great faith, that ſhal vphold vs in all extremities. And as in theſe caſes we would condemne others of want of wiſdome, which would beleeue no more then they ſaw or felt: ſo muſt we condemne our ſelues and others of want of ſpirituall and heauenly wiſdome of the word of God, that in ſuch caſes as theſe of our ſaluation, we will beleeue no more, then we can ſee and feele: and we muſt commend the other to be of better iudgement, and greater faith, who doe beleeue more then they could either ſee or feele.

For the releeuing of our ſelues therefore in ſuch caſes as theſe, what muſt wee doe? Wee muſt doe that, which Thomas the Apoſtle ſhould haue done: namely, he ſhould haue beleeued thoſe that tolde him, that Chriſt was riſen, and that they had ſeene him: and he ſhould haue beleeued

ued the wordes of Christ himselfe, who had foretold him, that he should be put to death, and that within three daies he should rise againe: which wordes of Christ must needes haue beene verified in their time, though none had euer seene him. So must we doe, euen beleeue the word and promises of God, in the mouthes of his faithfull seruants, who are able both to see further into them, and also to discerne more testimonies of faith, and of the fauour of God in vs, then we our selues can doe. And though we, whome they doe most of all concerne, doe not see them at all, or as we desire: it is sufficient, that others, whom we ought to credit, doe see them in vs, and do constantly and vpon their credit auouch the same vnto vs.

For it is most certaine and true, though eury man should best knowe himselfe: yet it so often falleth out, that

that wee are not fit iudges of our ſelues, and of our own eſtate, neither of body, nor of ſoule: and therefore if we will be rightly perſwaded of our ſelues, we muſt not ſo much rely vpon our owne iudgement, as giue credit vnto others; which may and doe ſee that in vs, which wee our ſelues doe not, neither can. As when a man is daungerouſly ſicke of ſome diſeaſe, though hé haue ſome generall knowledge of the eſtate of his body, yet he may take himſelfe to be ſtronger or weaker, nearer or further off frō death, then indeed he is: and therfore in ſuch caſe we ask the aduiſe of ſome skilfull Phyſitians, and truſt their iudgement better then our owne; in ſo much that though a man be a very skilfull Phyſitian, he will hardly or not at all practiſe vpon himſelfe in great extremities, but vſeth the helpe of other Phyſitians, and is contented to be ordered at their diſcretion.

cretion: Euen ſo when a man is dangerouſly ſicke in his ſoule, either of vnbeleefe, or otherwiſe, he is not to iudge of himſelf at that time, though he be a very good chriſtian, but he muſt for his recouerie out of that eſtate, vſe the helpe of other godly miniſters, and hearken vnto their iudgement concerning himſelfe.

And that we might ſee the truth of this moſt clearly in an other caſe, we muſt conſider, that as when the Deuill preuaileth againſt vs by preſumption, we ſo fauour our ſelues, & are ſo partiall that way, that we imagine, both that we haue thoſe vertues and graces of God in vs, and that in great meaſure, which we haue not, neither can any man ſee them in vs; and alſo that we are free from thoſe corruptions and ſinnes, which yet do apparantly breake out in vs, and all the world may eaſily ſee them: So on the otherſide, when he hath gotte the

the aduantage of vs by diffidence & despaire, he maketh vs to rigorous & hard against our selues; and perswadeth vs that we want those graces, which doe apparantly shew thēselues to others; and to haue those sinnes & corruptions, and that measure of thē which in truth we haue not, neither is any able to discerne them in vs, though we crie out against our selues for them.

So that in both these estates, wherein we deceiue our selues of our selues, if we wilbe holpen, we must deny our selues, and not measure our selues by our selues, but giue credit to those, who as they are wise to discerne, and faithfull to iudge; so are they also true to report what they thinke of vs, and of our estate. Which if we will not doe, we must needes continue in our vnbeleefe, and other sinnes so much the longer: and it shall be a very hard thing to recouer vs out of the same.

ſame. Let vs therefore as we loue our owne good, in ſuch extreame caſes as theſe, when by the temptation of Satan we are brought to a narrowe poynt, hearken vnto thoſe faithfull miniſters and godly brethren of ours, who are able, (becauſe they are out of temptation, and the caſe is not their owne) better to iudge of vs, then we our ſelues: and then haue we made a good entrance vnto the turning of our ſoules, though we be not preſently reſtored to perfect health: and though we haue not preſent comfort, yet the extremities of our feares ſhall be greatly ſtaied: and this ſtaying of vs wil miniſter further hope of full recouerie: and it is none of the leaſt mercies of God to ſee, that we haue beene deceiued in our ſelues, and are not able rightly to iudge of our ſelues. Thus we ſee, how faith, and great faith, is without feeling: and when we be oppreſſed with this

this temptation, how we must helpe our selues by beleeuing others more then our selues, yea euen of our owne selues.

Moreouer, to this effect must we be admonished, that as in the natural life there are three ages, the infancie, the childhood or youth, and the riper and perfect age: so in the spirituall life the Scripture maketh mention of three ages; for of those that are in Christ, and truly belong vnto him, some are new borne babes, as S. Peter calleth them, but newly begotten of the immortall seede of the word of God: others are little children, that haue more profited in knowledge, and in the mysterie of their saluation; and some are in comparison of them, perfect men, and are comming vnto the measure of their full age in Christ. These latter are able to iudge of themselues, and of others: for by long custome they haue their wits ex-

1. Pet. 2. 2.
Gal. 4. 19
Eph. 4. 13.
Heb. 5. 14.

exerciſed to diſcerne both good and euill: the ſecond ſort, is leſſe able to iudge of themſelues, the third not at all. A babe though it be heire apparant vnto the crowne of the greateſt Monarch in the world, it hath no ſenſe or feeling of it: nay, though it liueth, it is not able to iudge of it ſelfe, whether it hath life or no: but others doe ſee by the operations of life, that it is a liuing creature, and hath an immortal ſoule: and dying in that eſtate, yea as ſoone as it is borne, it ſhall hereafter liue for euer and euer.

So a great many, that are borne a-
Ioh. 3 5. gaine of water, and of the Spirit, and thereby are made heires of the kingdome of God, as Chriſt ſaith to Nicodemus; they are neuer but babes, beyond that age they neuer goe, and ſome of them fal aſleepe in the Lord, as ſoone as they are made partakers of this ſpirituall birth; as the theefe vpon the croſſe died preſently after his

his conuerſion: and Chriſt ſheweth vs in the Goſpel, that ſome are called at the eleuenth houre to work in the vineyard, that is, in their later part of their life they are called to the ſtate of ſaluation and grace, and to receiue the reward of their calling, which is eternall life. In which eſtate of theirs they can haue little or no feeling at all of their ſpirituall life. But as other children die before they know, that they were aliue; ſo theſe die before they did feele any great power of the ſpirituall life in themſelues. But as others did ſee that it was aliue, becauſe they ſaw how it deſired the milke of their mothers, & how they did thriue by it: ſo others may ſee in ſuch ſpirituall infants, that the life of God is in them by the appetite that they haue vnto the word of God, that they eſteeme it, as their appointed food, as Iob ſaith of himſelfe, and that thereby they grow in many graces of the Spirit

Math. 20.6.

Iob 23.12.

Spirit of God, as in a feare to offend him, and in a deſire vnto their owne ſaluation, though they haue little aſſurance, ſenſe, or feeling of it in thē-ſelues: and ſo are heires of the kingdome of God, though they die before euer they had any great feeling of it in themſelues.

And for thoſe that are of riper age in Chriſt, and haue had ſome feeling of their ſaluation, and haue loſt it; they are not to be addicted to their owne iudgement, to thinke they neuer had it, becauſe it is now loſt, or that they ſhall neuer haue it againe, becauſe it is taken from them for a while; for the life of God may ſtill be in them, though the preſent feeling of it be taken away: and therfore at this time, concerning their owne preſent ſtate, they muſt beleeue others, that can ſee more into them, then themſelues. For as in ſome diſeaſes of the bodie a man may haue all his

his ſenſes taken away from him for a while; or he may be ſo ſore wounded in the head, and his braine ſo diſtempered, that he can not tell, whether himſelfe be aliue or dead: but others by their breathing, and ſome other operations of life doe ſee euidently, that life remaineth in them, and ſo hope that they may be recouered. So a man may be ſo ſpiritually ſicke of vnbeleefe, or ſo ſore wounded in his ſoule with temptations, that he cannot ſee any token of Gods fauour in himſelfe; but yet by the praiers that he maketh vnto God to be holpen out of theſe diſtreſſes, by the loue that he beareth vnto God, and to Gods people, and other operations of the ſpirit of God in him, they that are wiſe ſhall be able to diſcerne that the life of Gods ſpirit breatheth in them, to whome they muſt giue credit aboue themſelues: and ſo thinke, that they are in a better eſtate of ſal-

uation, then they can ſee themſelues to be.

And it muſt not ſeeme ſtraunge vnto vs, that other ſhould ſee better into our eſtate, then we our ſelues can. For oftentimes it falleth out, that ſome great affection of the minde ſo blindeth vs, that we imagine that we haue not that, which indeed we haue. He that is blinded with couetouſnes of theſe worldly goods, by the vnſatiable deſire that is in him, neuer ſatisfied, though he hath more to liue on then many hundreds, yet ſtill he is complaining of his want, and pouerty; and ſaith, that he hath nothing: and tel him of this, and of that which God hath beſtowed vpon him, yet becauſe he hath not all that he deſireth, he maketh no account of them, and all is vnto him, as though he had nothing. So he that is ſicke of a ſpirituall couetouſneſſe, and deſireth the feeling of Gods fauour in a great

ſure, and ſuch an aſſurance of his ſaluation, as might be without al doubt: which becauſe he can not come vnto, becauſe the fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and in it there is nothing but doubting, he imagineth that becauſe there is ſome want of aſſurance and feeling, that therefore there is no feeling at all: as the couetous man by reaſon of ſome want, ſaith that he hath nothing: the want of that, which he hath not, ſo blindeth his eyes, that he can not ſee that, that he hath: ſo the want of ſome aſſurance ſo troubleth them, and they haue ſo great a deſire vnto more, that they can not ſee that they haue, but for want of ſome, denie all.

A remedie againſt which temptation is, not to deceiue our ſelues any longer with an imagination of ſuch a meaſure of aſſurance of ſaluation ordinarily in the children of God, which ſhould be without all waue-

ring or doubting: or ſuch a meaſure of feeling of the loue of God, and ioy therein, as ſhould abandon all diſtruſtfulnes and ſorow: this is not to be looked for in this world: the fulneſſe of ioy is in the preſence of God, and at his right hand onely are pleaſures for euermore: here we haue them but in meaſure: there indeede is ioy vnſpeakable, and moſt glorious without all interruption; when we ſhall ſee God face to face: and know him as we are knowne, whome now we behold as through a glaſſe, and ſo may ſometimes doubt, whether we ſee him or no. This meaſure we muſt be contented with, and ſo pray as the Pſalmiſt doth, Remember me, O Lord, with the fauour of thy people, that I may ſee the felicity of thy choſen: where he deſireth not ſuch ioy & feeling of the fauour of god, which he did imagine himſelfe, but which God doth vſually beſtow vpon his peo-

Pſal. 16. 11.

1. Cor. 13. 12.

Pſal. 106. 4, 5.

people, which is that that is ioyned with much doubting, & many feares, euen then ſometimes when it is at the beſt: and ſo not imagine, that vnleſſe wee haue it according to our owne deſire, we haue it not at all, or as Gods people vſe to haue it. For vndoubtedly it is thus with the beſt, at one time or other.

And concerning this deſire of feeling and aſſurance, wee muſt vnderſtand thus much, that none can haue this, but thoſe that beleeue: ſo that though we ſhould want them both altogether, yet the deſire that wee haue vnto them, doth manifeſtly argue that we haue faith. For who can deſire to feele the heate and light of the ſunne, but he that hath life in him? a dead carkaſe cannot doe it. So if there were not the life of the Spirit in vs by faith, we could not haue any deſire to feele the fauour of God in vs in truth at all. He that is neuer

ſo weake, yet if he ſtill deſire ſtrēgth, it appeareth that there is life in him: ſo when we moſt earneſtly deſire to be ſtrengthened in the aſſurance of our ſaluation, it is a manifeſt token, that the life of God is ſtill in vs: therefore let vs comfort our ſelues with ſuch deſires, and know aſſuredly, that as they be of God, ſo he will ſatisfie them in his good time: for the Lord
Pſal.10.17. heareth the deſire of the poore, he prepareth their heart, and bendeth his eare vnto them: that is, as he giueth them ſo earneſtly to deſire theſe things, which others neglect, ſo he will ſhew by giuing alſo that which they doe deſire, that he hath not giuen them ſuch holy deſires in vaine. For the ſaying of our Sauiour Chriſt muſt be verified vpon all men,
Matth.5.6. without reſpect of perſons, Bleſſed are all they that hunger and thirſt, not onely after righteouſnes, but after any other graces of his Spirit, for they ſhall

ſhall be ſatisfied and filled. And the ſaying of the virgine Marie ſhall be verified in them, He hath filled the hungrie with good things, and ſent away the rich emptie: that is, as they that haue no ſuch deſires, can looke for no ſuch feeling, ſo they that are vnſatiable in their deſires that way, ſhall be ſatisfied in time with abundance of feeling: and if they waite vpon God with patience, beleeuing theſe promiſes, it ſhall be vnto them according to their faith. Luk. 1. 53.

That I might not ſay here that, which is yet moſt true, that while they ſo vnmeaſurably deſire it, they haue it in a good meaſure. For herein is the ſaying of S. Auguſtine moſt true, that the deſire of any grace of God, is in ſome ſort the grace it ſelfe. He that vnfainedly deſireth the forgiuenes of his ſinnes, doth with this deſire obtaine the remiſſion of them. He that deſireth a greater

measure of repentance, doth from day to day profit in repentance: he that desireth not to sinne, is no sinner before God: he that desireth the fauour of God, hath obtained it alreadie: he that desireth the assurance of his saluation, and the feeling of Gods fauour, he hath both of them in some sort already. When Abraham was willing to offer vp his sonne Izack at Gods commande-
Heb.11.17. mēt, he is said to haue don it by faith: his desire before god, was as though he had done it: so when we offer vp these desires vnto God, it is as well with vs in his account, as though we had the things themselues.

For as the Apostle speaketh of
2.Cor.8.12. almes, if there be first a willing mind it is accepted according to that a mā hath, and not according to that that a man hath not: that is, God looketh not so much to his deede, as to his desire: as the poore widow that offe-

red

red but two mites, was more accepted of God, and commended by Christ, then they that offered much, becauſe of her great deſire. So when in the ſacrifice of prayer we offer vp our hearts vnto god with holy deſires either for aſſurance of his fauour, or feeling of our ſaluation, we are accepted of him, as though we had them: and when he giueth vs this deſire, he beginneth to worke the grace it ſelfe: and that deſire is the earneſt peny & pledge of the thing it ſelfe.

Chriſt ſaith in the Goſpel, that whoſoeuer looketh on a woman to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. So that the deſire vnto any ſin, is the ſin it ſelfe before God: then the deſire vnto any vertue, is the vertue and grace it ſelfe before God. And therefore he that looketh vp vnto God with an earneſt deſire of his ſaluatiõ, he hath obtained it alreadie before God, Math. 5. 27.

God, who seeth & aloweth the desire of his heart. He that looketh on his own vnbeleefe and corruptions with a desire to be rid of them, he is thereby discharged of them before God. Thus we see, that to desire feeling is an argument of faith, as to desire meate is an argument of life: yea to desire feeling, is the very beginning of it in our selues: and therefore we must be comforted ouer them.

Concerning which feelings, we must also consider, that in them that haue them in the greatest measure, they are not alwaies alike: but they are going and comming, as the day and the night. And as in the course of nature there is not one tenour of things, but Gods works are subiect to many changes: so is it in the course of Gods grace: that which we haue receiued, doth not alwaies continue alike, neither haue we the same feeling of it to day, that we had yester-

day:

day: whether we looke to the feruencie of prayer, or zeale to Gods word, or loue to his Saints, or assurance of our saluation. Here we must comfort our selues with the remembrance of that that we haue found in our selues in times past, and hope that we may finde the like againe: and say as it is in the Psalme, I haue remembred the times past, and haue beene comforted. For as the woman that is quickned with child, and feeleth it stirre in her bodie, though shee doe not alwaies feele it stirre alike; and sometimes not at all, and sometimes more weakely then before: yet shee assures her selfe, that the child is liuing, because shee hath felt it stirre before, & so hopeth that shee shall doe againe. So when Christ is formed in vs first of all, as the Apostle speaketh, we haue the feeling of him stirring and moouing in our hearts by his holy Spirit, dwelling in vs: which liuely

Psal. 77. 11. & 119 52.

Gal. 4. 19.

mo-

motions though wee feele not ſo ſtrongly moouing in vs afterwards, or not at all; yet we doubt not, but
Eph.3.17. that Chriſt dwelleth in our hearts by faith ſtill, and hope to feele it as ſenſibly againe in time, as we haue done: & ſo much the more, becauſe Chriſt beeing formed in vs, neuer dieth: and therefore the remembrance of our former Feelings muſt comfort vs ouer the want of them for the time preſent: for they are not alwaies alike in any that haue them: it is ſufficient that we haue had them, therefore if we labour after them, they will returne vnto vs againe, when it ſhall pleaſe God. And thus much for this, that S. *Thomas* in this matter of faith addicts himſelfe to his owne feeling.

THe fourth and laſt degree of his vnbeleefe appeareth in this, Except I ſee in his hands the print of the nayles, and in his ſide the print of the ſpeare, I will not beleeue it. For why

why ſhould he deſire this? not onely to ſee him, and to feele him; but to ſee in his hands the print of the nailes, and to put his finger into them; and to ſee in his ſide the print of the ſpeare, and to put his hand into it. Did he not know that theſe wounds and skarres were proper vnto his bodie onely while it was ſubiect vnto infirmitie and weaknes: and that after his reſurrection his bodie was glorified? And ſo he might haue thought, that though it ſhould be graunted vnto him to ſee him, yet he could not by any reaſon or groũd frõ the Scripture, haue hope to ſee him thus: & yet he ſaith, Except I ſee the print of the nailes, &c. I will not beleeue it: he doth not ſay, except I ſee him: but, except I ſee him with the print of the nayles, and of the ſpeare, I will not beleeue it.

This is then the nature of vnbeleefe, that when it will not profit by the

the ordinarie meanes, that God hath appointed for the confirming of faith; it desireth such things, whereof there is no warrant, either from reason, or from Scripture. As here S. Thomas neglecting what Christ had saide vnto him, that when he should be put to death, within three daies he would rise again: and that also which was tolde him by the Apostles, and diuers others, namely, that he was risen againe, and had appeared vnto such and such: he saith, Except I see him my selfe, with the print of the nayles in his feete, and of the speare in his side, I will not beleeue it. Concerning which poynt; though Christ did rise indeede out of the sepulchre with these markes in his glorified body, and did retaine them whiles he taried on the earth, that thereby it might more certainely be knowne, that the same body of his that was crucified, was raised vp a-

gaine;

gaine; yet Thomas had no generall rule to leade him to thinke that it should be so, but rather according to the common condition of the bodies of all the faithfull in the day of resurrection, so to conceiue of the body of Christ raised vp. For that which is said of the resurrection of all the faithful, the members of Christs mysticall body, must needes be much more true of him the head: for it belongeth to them onely by vertue of his resurrection. Now of them the Apostle writeth thus to the Corinthians; The body is sowne in corruption, and raised in incorruption: that is, with nothing tending thereunto as wounds doe: it is sowne in dishonor, hauing no glory nor beauty on it, as Christs body was most of all, when besides that the life was gone out of it, and so it looked pale and wanne; it had also many deformites by the stripes of his whippings, and the crowne of thornes, & 1. Cor. 15. 42.

the

the print of the nailes in his hands & feete, and of the ſpeare in ſide: it is raiſed in glory; that is, with all perfection & excellencie of beauty without any blemiſh at all: it is ſowne in weakenes, it is raiſed in power: and therefore without marks and tokens of weakenes & infirmitie: for a body ſore wounded, euen vnto death, as Chriſts was, hath leſſe power in it, then it had before. Therefore ſeeing he deſired to ſee Chriſts body raiſed vp, he ſhould not haue deſired to ſee it thus, and with theſe markes.

And for the further confirmation of this, we may remember what the Apoſtle ſaith touching the glorious ſtate of our bodies to be raiſed vp: Phil. 3. 20. Our conuerſation is in heauen, from whence alſo we looke for the Sauiour, euen the Lord Ieſus Chriſt: who ſhall chaunge our vile bodie, that it may be faſhioned like vnto his glorious bodie, according to the working,

whereby

whereby he is able euen to ſubdue all things vnto himſelfe: therefore as we ſhall be raiſed vp without skarres and marks of infirmity, which many haue in theſe daies of their pilgrimage: ſo he had no reaſon to thinke, but that Chriſts bodie ſhould be. Therefore though he would not beleeue, till he ſawe him, he could not looke to ſee him after this manner, that he preſcribeth.

And though he did at the laſt appeare with theſe markes in his body both to the eleuen firſt, and afterwards vnto Thomas: yet it was not becauſe his bodie was properly, and of it owne nature then ſubiect vnto them, no more then it was to hunger, when he did eate with them: but it was by a ſpeciall extraordinarie diſpenſation; as when Angels that haue no bodies, did appeare in the ſhape of men. Therefore this could not be looked for: and it was in reſpect of Luk. 24. 43.

the ordinarie courſe of Gods dealing ſomewhat vnreaſonable, to tie the Lord vnto that for the ſtrengthening of his faith, and to ſay, Except I ſee the print of the nayles, and of the ſpeare, I wil not beleeue it: for others had ſeene him, and not ſeene him
Ioh.20.15. with theſe; as Marie Magdalen at the ſepulchre, where ſhee miſtooke him to be the gardener, or the keeper of that place, where Chriſt was buried
Mark.16.12. in a garden: and the two Diſciples in their iourney, as they were going to Emmaus. Therefore we muſt take heede, how we yeild to our vnbeleef: for it will make vs looke for and deſire ſuch things at the hand of God, for the confirming of our faith, as haue no ground eithet from Scripture, or from reaſon: though it pleaſeth God of his infinite goodnes to beare with men ſometimes this way, and to yeild to them, either to the ſtrengthening of their faith, or to the

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leauing of them without excuſe in their vnbeleefe. So that as the Apoſtle ſaith of couetouſnes, They that will be rich fall into tentation and ſnares, and into many fooliſh and noiſome luſts, which drowne men in perdition and deſtruction; So we may ſay of vnbeleefe, that it cauſeth men to deſire many fooliſh and vnreaſonable things, and ſuch as often tende to their owne hurt. 1. Tim. 6. 9.

Thus in the Goſpel our Sauiour Chriſt in the parable of the rich glutton, and in his perſon noteth out the thoughts and deſires of vnbeleeuers here in this world: where he is broght in ſpeaking vnto Abraham after this manner; I pray thee father, that thou wouldeſt ſend Lazarus vnto my fathers houſe (for I haue many brethrē) that he may teſtifie vnto them, leaſt they alſo come into this place of torment. Thus vnbeleeuers would haue dead men come from heauen, & tell Luk. 16. 27.

them what is done there, and what in hell: but Christ sheweth what answer Abraham gaue him for our instruction; They haue Moses, and the Prophets, let them heare them: as if he had said, they doe sufficiently declare the truth of these things, of the they may learne them, and so it is needelesse to haue any come from heauen to tell them, there are enough vpon the earth, that doe declare it daily: & so doe the Apostles, and the Euangelists now much more. But the rich man saide againe, Father Abraham, but if one come from the dead, they will amend their liues: which is as if he had said, Though they doe heare daily out of the Scripture, what punishment is in hell for the wicked, yet they doe not beleeue it, except some come from the dead, and tell them of it, and then they would.

Thus fooliſh is vnbeleefe, to neglect the certen testimonie of the Prophets

phets and Apoſtles, which is the ordinarie meanes to reueale his will vnto vs, and to deſire that Angels or dead men might come from heauen, or from hell to ſpeake vnto them, and then they would beleeue thē: which in theſe daies is ſo extraordinary, that it is not to be looked for. But this is a ſhort and plaine anſwer for ſuch men ſet downe there from Abraham, who ſaid thus vnto him, If they heare not 31.
Moſes and the Prophets, neither will they be perſwaded, though one riſe from the dead againe. Where Chriſt ſheweth not only what are the means of knowing theſe things, euen the bookes of the Prophets and Apoſtles in which the will of God is perfectly ſet downe concerning all things, that are needefull for vs to know, and that the other is not to be deſired, nor hoped for. So if they had them, they would not profit by them, when as they neglect the other: but yet we ſee

by this, that vnbeleefe is full of theſe fooliſh deſires.

And truly if we could ſo well ſee into the hearts of men, as Chriſt did when he vttered this parable, wee ſhould ſee, that the greateſt part of the world is ſtill of this mind, to neglect all the ordinarie meanes, that God hath appointed either to worke faith in them at the firſt, or to confirme it in them afterwards; and to deſire ſuch meanes, [illegible]re impoſſible and not to be looked for, becauſe they are contrarie to the word of God. For
Heb.1.1. the Apoſtle ſaith, At ſundrie times, and in diuers manners God ſpake in the olde time to our fathers by the Prophets: but in theſe laſt daies he hath ſpoken vnto vs by his Sonne: that is, in the old time God did ſundrie waies declare his will vnto men, as ſometimes by viſions when they were waking, and by dreames when they were ſleeping, by Vrim & Thū-

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mim in the Prieſts breaſt, by Angels from heauen, by the Prophets, &c. but now he hath fully declared his will by his ſonne Chriſt, and hath appointed that we ſhould come to the knowledge of it by that order which Chriſt hath eſtabliſhed: who when he aſcended vp into heauen, gaue vnto his Church, Paſtors and teachers, Eph. 4. 12. for the repairing of the Saints, for the worke of the miniſterie, and for the edification of the bodie of Chriſt, till we all meete together (in the vnitie of faith, and the acknowledging of the ſon of God) vnto a perfect man, and vnto the meaſure of the age of the fulneſſe of Chriſt: therefore as long as we liue, we are to looke for no other meanes then theſe of Paſtors and teachers, the other haue ceaſed long agoe, as beeing appointed for the old world.

But yet vnbeleeuing men refuſe theſe, and with itching eares they

linger after the other: and ſome are ready to ſay, Oh if I might haue an Angel come and tell me of the deſtruction that ſhall come vpon the
Gen.19.13. wicked for their ſinne, as Lot had in Sodom, I would beleeue it: and ſome are ready to ſay, if Lazarus might come from the dead, that is, if ſome of thoſe my freinds and aquaintance that are dead, might riſe out of their graues, and come and tell me, what they haue ſeene and felt in heauen & hell, if I might haue but a litle conference with them, I would beleeue them. Or if I could ſee into the heauens, and there behold Chriſt ſtanding at the right hand of God, as
Act.7.56. Stephen the Martyr did: or if I could heare him ſpeake vnto me from heauen, and call me from my ſinnes, as
& 9.4. Saul did, when he was a perſecuter, then I would hearken vnto him, and become a new man. And others thinke, Oh if they might be rapt into

to the third heauens, and be taken vp into paradiſe, as Paul was, and there heare God ſpeake vnto them, then they would performe great matters, and lead an Angels life: or if beeing here on earth they might ſee God come downe from heauen vnto thē, & they might haue ſome ſure token, that it was he that ſpake vnto them, as the Iſraelites had in the wildernes, when God ſpake there vnto them vpon Mount Sinai, then they would yeeld great obedience, and nothing ſhould draw thē frō that, which they had heard. Theſe and many ſuch fooliſh and impoſſible things doe men deſire, & then they ſay they would beleeue all things, and vntill thē they neede not, neither will they. 2. Cor. 12. 4. Exod. 19. 20.

But what ſaith the Apoſtle to the Romanes? The righteouſnes which is of faith, ſpeaketh on this wiſe, Say not in thine heart, who ſhall aſcend into heauen? (that is, to bring Chriſt from Rom. 10. 6.

from aboue) or who ſhall deſcend into the deepe? (that is, to bring Chriſt from the dead.) But what ſaith it? The word is neere thee euen in thy mouth, and in thine heart; this is the word of faith which wee preach. Where he ſheweth what are the doubtfull and wauering thoughts of vnbeleeuers concerning that ſaluation, that is purchaſed for vs by Chriſt, and offered vnto vs in the Goſpel: & how thoſe thoughts & imaginations by faith are to be repreſſed. For they which ſeek righteouſnes in thēſelues, that by the workes of the law they might be iuſtified and ſaued, beeing alwaies vnquiet and doubtfull of their ſaluation, becauſe they cannot finde perfect righteouſnes in themſelues, are ready to ſay, if I might ſee any Saint or Angel come from heauen to cary me thither, or to aſſure me that I ſhall come thither; or any come from the depth of hell to tell me,

me, that I am deliuered from thence, I could beleeue it.

But the righteousnes of faith, that is, true faith whereby we are made righteous in Christ, suppresseth these thoughts of vnbeleefe; and telleth vs according to that, that is preached in the Gospel, that Christ hath fulfilled all things needefull for our saluation; euen that he hath suffered the curse of the law to deliuer vs from hel, and that he hath fulfilled the righteousnes of the law to bring vs to heauen, and he hath ascended vp thither for vs in our nature, to prepare a place for vs: and he hath praied vnto God for vs, that where he is we may be to behold his glorie. Thus true faith for the certentie of our saluation, bids vs rely vpon that, that Christ hath don for vs, and vpon that, which this way is set downe in the Gospel: and so our consciences shall be quieted, and no man neede to aske these questi-

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ons, who can aſcend vp into heauen, or bring vs from hell? ſeeing that the Goſpel teacheth that both theſe are done by Chriſt for all thoſe that imbrace their calling by a true faith.

But vnbeleefe neglecting this, deſireth that, that is vnreaſonable, and ſaith, Oh, but I ſee none that hath aſcended vp to heauen, & come downe againe to tell me, what is there done for me. Who ſhall aſcend? who is he that hath, or will doe ſo much? then I could beleeue it. And I ſee none, that hath deſcended into hell, and returned, to tell me that I am deliuered from thence. Who ſhall deſcend into the deepe? where is he that hath, or will doe this for me? then I could beleeue it. And ſo not onely the vnbeleeuers are wholly poſſeſſed and ouercõ with theſe doubtfull thoughts; but all men, ſo farre as vnbeleefe preuaileth in them, are ready to ſay thus, at leaſt in their hearts, Oh, if any

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might come from heauen, to assure me, that I shall come thither, and be saued, then I could beleeue it: or if any might come from hell, to assure me that I am deliuered from thence, then I should be quiet in my minde, and deliuered from these feares, that I am incombred with.

But what saith faith? say not thus in thine heart, &c. that is, haue thou no such doubts in thy mind, but consider what Christ hath done for thee, to bring thee to heauen, and to deliuer thee from hell: and what the gospel doth this way offer vnto thee, and what thou hast heard preached out of it to this ende, and rest in thē: For if thou shalt confesse with thy mouth the Lord Iesus, and shalt beleeue in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saued: that is, if thou professe plainely, and sincerely, and openly, that thou takest Iesus onely to be thy Lord and Saui- Rom. 10.9.

Sauiour; and that it was the very counsell and purpose of God, in the resurrection of his sonne to redeeme vs from death, and hell, as it is preached vnto vs in the Gospel, thou shalt be saued. So faith leadeth vs frō these vain speculations vnto that, that is reuealed vnto vs in the word.

And whereas the best beleeuers are subiect vnto these temptations at one time or other, by reason of the rēnants of vnbeleefe abiding in thē: yet the Apostle giueth vs to vnderstand, that they come frō vnbeleefe, and not frō faith: but that it is the nature of faith to striue against them, & to suppresse them in measure, so farre forth as faith preuaileth, and getteth the victory in them. So that when they begin to haue these doubts in their minds, and to thinke with thēselues, how shal I ascend into heauē? how shall I escape hell, I cannot tell what shall become of me? then faith

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is as a voice ſpeaking behind them, to admoniſh them of their duty, and as it were pulling them by the elbow bids them hold their peace, Oh ſay not in thine heart, who ſhall aſcend into heauen, &c. Oh haue no ſuch thoughts in thy mind: this were to deny what Chriſt hath done for thee concerning thy redemption from hell, and thy aſcention into heauen: therefore ſay not ſo in any caſe, no not in thine heart: giue ouer reaſoning with vnbeleefe, and reſt in the word of God.

Thus we ſee how vnbeleefe bindeth God to vnreaſonable courſes, & deſireth of him for the ſtrengthening of faith things not to be deſired: therefore as we ſee frō whence ſuch do ariſe, ſo we muſt ſtriue againſt vnbeleefe, that we might ouercome ſuch fooliſh conceits. And thus the vnbeleuing Iewes did reaſon againſt our Sauiour Chriſt, when he was vp-

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on the crosse, and thereby did shew what wicked and absurd thoughts their infidelitie did driue them vnto.

Matth.27. 40. If thou be the sonne of God, come downe from the crosse: he saued others, but he cannot saue himselfe: if

42. he be the king of Israel, let him now come downe from the crosse, and we

43. will beleeue in him: he trusted in God, let him deliuer him now, if he will haue him: for he saide, I am the sonne of God. Behold what vnreasonable things they doe, as it were, binde Christ vnto, that they might beleeue in him, or els they will not: for they say, let him now come down from the crosse, and now saue himselfe, or els neuer.

They did not consider how all the propheſies of the Messiah set downe in Scripture were verified in him, euen from his first conception, vnto this very houre: how he was conceiued by the holy Ghost, and borne of a vir-

a virgin, and of the houſe of Dauid, and in Bethleem: how the wiſe men came from the Eaſt vnto Ieruſalem, and told them that the King of the Iewes was borne, and that they had ſeene his ſtarre: neither what old father Simeon, and Anna the propheteſſe ſaid of him in the temple, when he was circumciſed. They regarded not his doctrine ful of authoritie and power, themſelues beeing driuen to confeſſe, that neuer man before ſpake like vnto him: they were not mooued with his miracles, when they ſaw how by his owne power he healed them of incurable diſeaſes, made the blind to ſee, the lame to goe, the deafe to heare: caſt out the deuills by the power of his word; raiſed vp thē that were dead: and did many more things els, which were ſufficient to conuince them, that he was the true Meſſiah and Sauiour, to whome all the Prophets gaue witneſſe: neither

did they giue any credit vnto the voice of God himselfe, which they heard from heauen, when he was
Matth.3.17. baptized, This is my beloued sonne, in whome I am well pleased: at what time also the heauens were opened, and the Spirit of God descended like a doue, and lighted vpon him. Much lesse did they giue credit vnto the testimonie of Iohn, who saide of him,
Ioh.1.36. Behold the lambe of God, that taketh away the sinnes of the world.

None of all these they regarded: they were not sufficient to cause thē to beleeue in him, they despised them all, as though they had been nothing worth; but such a foolish thing as this they desire, and that should satisfie them: if he would come downe from the crosse, and that *euen very now* at their appointment, and tarie no longer, then they could beleeue in him indeede: but if he would not doe that at all, or not now presently without

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out any delay they will not beleeue in him. Which if he had done, he had forsaken his office of redemption, for he came to suffer and die for vs, that he might by his owne sufferings deliuer vs from death, and to die vpon the crosse, that he might redeeme vs from the curse of the law, beeing made a curse for vs, as it is written, Cursed is euery one that hangeth on tree. And when he had suffered all things needefull for our saluation, saying vpon the crosse, It is finished, and so gaue vp the ghost, and afterwards was buried: God raised him vp at the time appointed, euen the third day, and loosed the sorowes of death, because it was impossible, that hee should be held of it any longer, as S. Peter saith. But see the foolishnes of vnbeleefe, the Iewes would haue god then to deliuer him before it was time, euen so soone as he was vpon the crosse, and before he had suffered,

Gal. 3. 13.

Ioh. 19. 30.

Act. 2. 24.

or els they would not beleeue that he was the ſonne of God, or that he had any power to ſaue himſelfe or others.

And after this manner the Deuill teacheth other men alſo by vnbeleefe to reaſon againſt good men, and againſt themſelues: as if ſuch a man were an vpright man, ſuch an one as he maketh ſhew of, God would not ſuffer him to be ſo and ſo afflicted, but he would deliuer him frō this croſſe, that is vpon him: and ſo did the three friends of Iob reaſon againſt him to the great weakning of his faith: as this was alſo none of the leaſt temptations vnto Dauid, when the wicked
Pſal. 42. 10. ſaide of him in his miſerie, Where is now thy God? as if they had ſaide, Surely, if God were his God, he would haue deliuered him long before this. And of themſelues they are ready to ſay, if God would now deliuer me out of this affliction; if hee would

would now helpe me out of this trouble, I would thinke that he had some care of me indeede: and vnlesse they haue some present ease, or releefe, they can not be perswaded of the truth of his promises. But what saith the Scripture? Call vpon me in the day of thy trouble: so will I deliuer thee. So that we must seek vnto God for the performance of his promises: But how? euen as it is saide in an other Psalme, Heare my voice in the morning, O Lord: for in the morning will I direct me vnto thee, and I will waite: that is, after that he had praied vnto God, he would patiently waite vpon him with trust, till God did shew, that he had heard him. Euen as suiters doe at the court, when they haue put vp their petitions vnto the King, or the Counsell, though they haue not a present answer, they are not discouraged, and therefore giue still attendance, and tarie their

Psal. 50. 15.

& 5. 3.

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Psal. 50. 15.

& 5. 3.

leiſure, with hope of ſpeeding at the laſt.

And how long muſt we thus wait vpon God for his deliuerance? euen vntill it pleaſeth him to diſcharge vs: not preſcribing vnto him any time. Euen as it is ſaid in one of the Pſalms of degres, My ſoule waiteth on the Lord, more then the morning watch wacheth for the morning: that is, euen as they that are ſet to watch all night, doe not giue ouer their ſtation till the morning come, though the night be neuer ſo long: ſo we in affliction muſt not ceaſe waiting vpon God vntill the time appointed. And when is that? euen when he giueth vs our hearts deſire, & not before. Euen as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaketh in the name & perſon of the whole church, ſhewing after what manner, and how long he would ſeeke vnto God. Behold, as the eies of ſeruants looke vnto the hand of their maſters, and as the eies

& 130.6.

& 123.2.

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of a maide vnto the hand of her mistris; so our eies wait vpon the Lord our God, vntill he haue mercie vpon vs. So that he would continually and earnestly wait vpon God for his defence, not doubting of it, vntill such time as he found it by experience: and therefore if he deferre a while, we must tarie the longer, with good hope waiting. As the Prophet Habacuk saith, that after long prayer hee receiued this answer from the Lord concerning the deliuerance of the Church: that it was deferred a long time, therefore he would haue him to waite, for vndoubtedly in time it should come, and not faile, saying, The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the last it shall speake, and not lie: though it tary, yet wait thou, for it shall surely come, and shall not stay. Habak. 2. 3.

But vnbeleefe saith, I could beleeue these promises, if I might now

inioy them, and vnles I be preſently deliuered, I cannot thinke, that God regardeth me: and ſo it tieth Gods fauour to preſent deliuerance. And though the Scripture hath ſaid, that affliction is like vnto fire, and that our faith and patience is like vnto gold; and therefore as the gold muſt tarie in the fire vntill all the droſſe be conſumed, and the gold refined: ſo God wil haue vs to indure the croſſe, vntill our corruption be thoroughly purged, and our faith and patience be prooued to be pure and good; yet we are readie to ſay, that vnleſſe he deliuer me now, I cannot beleeue, that he hath any reſpect vnto me. And vnto all that, which faith ſaith vnto vs, concerning the tarying of Gods leiſure; vnbeleefe is readie to make anſwer, that vnleſſe God giue it now, I will thinke that I ſhall neuer haue it. And as faith or vnbeleefe preuaileth in vs at any time; ſo are theſe thoghts more

more or leſſe in vs, in the time of any affliction: for the one is of the fleſh, and the other of the Spirit, and both theſe beeing in the regenerate, The fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, & the Spirit againſt the fleſh; and theſe are contrarie one to an other: ſo that ye can not doe the ſame things that ye would, as Paul ſheweth to the Galatians. Gal. 5. 17.

And this is that, which euery one of vs hath experiẽce of in our ſelues: for how often when we haue beene in trouble, haue we thought, and ſaid in our owne hearts; vnles God giue me ſuch and ſuch meanes, there are none that will doe me good: and vnleſſe theſe helpe me, I can not looke for helpe from any: and ſo we are readie to tie Gods helpe to times, and to meanes. Whereas faith ſaith otherwiſe out of the word of God, namely, that he hath other times, and meanes in his hands to doe vs good by,

by, and that he is able to helpe vs whē all meanes faile vs. And beſides, what if he will not deliuer vs at all? but wil haue vs drinke of that cuppe, that he hath giuen vs, euen vnto death: as Chriſt himſelfe did: his loue is neuer a whit the leſſe vnto vs, no more then it was vnto him. Thus we ſee, how this vnbeleefe raigneth in this world, and yet how Chriſt of his infinite goodneſſe and mercie, beareth with thoſe that are his in it for a while, and cureth them of it at the laſt, as he did with the Apoſtle *Thomas*, and as he hath done with vs very often, and in many things.

And this is that, which the Prophet noteth to haue beene very often in the people of Iſrael, whiles they were in the wildernes, of whome he
Pſal.78.41 ſaith, They returned, and tempted God, and limited the holy one of Iſrael: that is, according to the ſtraitnes of their owne heart in their vnbeleefe,

leefe, ſo did they imagine of Gods preſence and power: and therefore they are ſaid, to limit the holy one of Iſrael, and as it were to compaſſe him in certaine bounds, and to indent with him after this manner: if hee would doe ſo and ſo for them, they would thinke that he cared for them, and were among thē for their good: & if he would not doe ſo, they would not beleeue it. And thus they did often, and therefore it is ſaide, they returned and tempted God: for when they had tēpted God thus one way, then they did it an other way. For ſometimes they deſired water, ſometimes meate, ſometimes daintie fleſh, as quailes; and that ſo importunately, that they ſaid, vnles they had theſe things according to their owne deſire, they thought either that God could not doe it, or that he cared not for them: and thus they ſpake againſt God, ſaying, Can God prepare a ta- verſ. 19.

ble

ble in the wildernes? behold, he ſmote the rocke that the waters guſhed out, and the ſtreames ouerflowed: can he giue bread alſo, and prepare fleſh for his people? And thus did they not onely once, but many times, and for many things: in ſo much that the Prophet ſpeaketh with admiration, How oft did they prouoke him in the wilderneſſe, and grieue him in the deſert! And thus for their aſſurãce that God was with them, and that he was willing and able to helpe them, they deſired theſe outward things, & ſo by the fooliſhnes of their deſires did apparantly ſhew the vnbeleefe that was in them.

So doe many vnbeleeuers of our time: looke what they earneſtly deſire, if they haue it not, they will not beleeue that God careth for them: & hereupon ſome of them ſay, if I might haue ſuch a thing, I would think that God loued me: and others ſay,

ſay, if God would beſtowe this or that vpon me, I would hope that I were in his fauour. And what things are they then which they deſire? onely outward, and appertaining to this life: and ſo according to their preſent wants through vnbeleefe they limite the loue of God, ſome to one thing, ſome to an other, and will not be perſwaded of it, but by the inioying of ſuch things as themſelues deſire.

And it is thus not onely in the vnbeleeuers: but all Gods children, ſo farre as the remnants of vnbeleefe do preuaile in them, are ſubiect vnto theſe temptatiõs, and to theſe deſires: and are ready to ſay, if I were rid of this affliction, which hath lien heauily vpon me a long time, I could be perſwaded of his fauour towards me. By which we are thus to profit, thereby to ſee what infidelity is lurking in vs, that ſo we might be ſory for it, & ſeeke to be holpen of it. And then we

ſhall

ſhall ſee the remedie againſt it to be this: that as the Apoſtle S. Thomas ſhould not haue tied the certenty of Chriſts reſurrection, to his apparition and ſhewing of himſelfe vnto him, ſaying, Vnles I ſee him my ſelfe, I will not beleeue it: for it was true, & to be beleeued of him and others, that Chriſt was riſen againe, though they had neuer ſeene him: much leſſe ſhould he haue tied it vnto this, that he would ſee him in that forme, that he was in vpon the croſſe, with the wounds and marks in his bodie, ſaying, Vnles I ſee in his hands the print of the nayles, and put my finger into the print of the nayles, and put my hand into his ſide, I will not beleeue it: for he might haue appeared vnto him in ſome other forme, as he did vnto others, at diuers times.

Euen ſo we are not to tie the certentie of Gods fauour to any one thing, and to ſay, vnles I haue this or that

that, I can not be perſwaded of Gods fauour: much leſſe vnto any of theſe outward things, which appertaine vnto our bodies, and to this life: for God our heauenly father hath many waies and meanes to aſſure his children of his loue and fauour towards them; and doth it as our earthly fathers doe, not onely to ſome one way, and to others an other way, but euen vnto the ſame not alike at all times, and by the ſame things. But eſpecially there are more ſure pledges and tokens of his loue, which he beſtoweth vpon his children, then all the outward benefits in the world; which onely for the moſt part the vnbeleeuers deſire, and meaſure gods fauour by them. For there are the graces & gifts of his holy Spirit proper vnto the elect, as a loue of God and of goodnes, an hatred of euill, a deſire to pleaſe God, a delight in the companie of the godly, and ſuch like:

in

in bestowing of which vpon man, he doth most of all manifest his loue vnto them. There are also his holy word and Sacraments, whereby he worketh the beginning and increase of these and other graces in those that are his: rare and inestimable testimonies of his fauour: of which it is said Psal.147.19. in the Psalme, He sheweth his word vnto Iaakob, his statutes & his iudgements vnto Israel: he hath not dealt so with euery nation, neither haue they known his iudgements. Where he maketh this a note of the loue of God to the people of the Iewes, aboue all other nations, that they had among them the doctrine of euerlasting life, which others wanted. And so this is none of the least testimonies of Gods fauour towardes vs, that we liue in these happie daies and blessed times, in which the Gospel is purely and sincerely preached, and that we inioy the ministerie of it.

But

But the greateſt token of all, wherby God hath manifeſted his loue vnto vs, is the death of his ſonne: of which Chriſt ſpeaketh in the goſpel, God ſo loued the world, that he gaue his onely begotten ſonne, that whoſoeuer beleeueth in him, ſhould not periſh, but haue euerlaſting life: wher he noteth the excellency of the loue of God, by the excellency of the gift. He ſo loued the world with an extraordinarie and wonderfull great loue, that he gaue his onely begottē ſonne to ſaue vs: and this is the fountaine and cauſe of all other benefits of his beſtowed, and to be beſtowed vpō vs: as the Apoſtle ſaith; God that ſpared not his owne ſonne, but gaue him for vs all to death, how ſhall he not with him giue vs all things alſo? and by him there are purchaſed and prepared for vs euerlaſting ioyes in the kingdome of heauen: and though we want many things in this world, yet Ioh. 1. 16. Rom. 8. 32.

God giueth vs patience, and mindes well contented with our eſtate, as a token that he loueth vs. So that by all theſe things, or by any one of them, and by many more is Gods loue knowen and to be beleeued. Therefore we muſt not be ſo fooliſh to ſtint God by vnbeleefe, and ſay, if I may haue this or that, I will be perſwaded of his fauour: for there are other things beſides thoſe which we imagine, whereby he may manifeſt his fauour vnto vs moſt clearly: and that alſo not onely in this world, but in the world to come: not onely which we haue in preſent poſſeſſion, but which we inioy through hope.

And therefore this is ſingularly commended in the faith of Iob, that whē he had loſt al his worldly goods, and in reſpect of his outward eſtate, he was brought vnto nothing; yet he did put his truſt in God: beleeuing that his fauour was not tied to them, nor

nor to any one of them: but that it was the ſame then, that it was before: and ſo vttered this cõfortable ſpeach proceeding frõ faith in Gods goodnes; Naked came I out of my mothers wombe, and naked ſhall I returne thither: the Lord hath giuen, and the Lord hath taken it, bleſſed be the name of the Lord. He doth not ſay, if God would reſtore all vnto me againe (as he did in time, yea he doubled them) then I would beleeue that he cared for me: but euen whiles he remained in the want of all, he bleſſed and praiſed the name of God; which could not be without great faith. Yea he ſaid further, that if he ſhould die in that eſtate, yet he would put his truſt in God, and beleeue that he cared for him: Loe though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him, and he ſhall be my ſaluation: in which words he confeſſeth, that he was ſo farre, euen in this great extremitie, Iob 1.21. & 13.15.

from deſpairing of life or ſaluation, as that in the very power and inſtant of death he would truſt in him; for he had other teſtimonies of Gods fauour, then all his outward proſperity: euen the teſtimony of a good conſcience, that he had walked before him in ſincerity and truth, and that he had been no hypocrite; as he declareth at large in the Chap. 31.

And he had further, for the vpholding of his faith, the conſtant truth of Gods promiſes; and thoſe not onely for this life, but for the life to come: and therefore he doubted not, but that it ſhould goe well with him, though he died in that eſtate: for he hoped at the laſt day to riſe againe, & to behold Chriſt his Sauiour to his euerlaſting comfort: when he ſaith, Oh that my words were now writte, oh that they were written euen in a booke: and grauen with an iron pen, in lead or in ſtone for euer; for I am

and 19.23.

ſure

ſure that my redemer liueth, and he ſhall ſtand the laſt on the earth: and though after my skinne wormes deſtroy this body, yet ſhall I ſee God in my fleſh, whom I ſhall ſee my ſelfe, and my eies ſhall behold, and none other for me, though my reines are conſumed within me. Where we ſee how he ſaith, that in the midſt of all his afflictions he did reioyce and glory in this, euen in the teſtimony of a good conſcience, whereby he did ſo reſt in the promiſes of God concerning his reſurrection, and life eternal, which was to come, that this did cõfirme him in the fauour of God againſt all temptations.

Thus true faith bindeth not Gods fauor to any of theſe outward things, whereby men doe commonly deſire to be aſſured of it: but it looketh vnto better things, whereby his loue is moſt apparant; and that not onely in this life, but in the life to come moſt

of all: as they be promiſed and ſet downe in the word of God. And that is the remedie againſt the fooliſh & vaine deſires of vnbeleefe. Let vs not therefore tie the aſſurance of Gods fauour vnto any one thing, but ſeeing that he hath many waies to declare it, let vs beleeue the promiſes of his word, and pray him to ſeale the vp in our hearts by what meanes it ſhall pleaſe him beſt: and let vs not be ſo froward and peruerſe, as to thinke it is not conſtant vnto vs, vnles it be ſealed vp that way, which we our ſelues doe moſt of all deſire.

Therefore to conclude the ſumme of all in few words. We ſee by the weakenes of S. Thomas, not onely what we are ſubiect vnto, but alſo how we may helpe our ſelues and others againſt the ſame. He did not beleeue that Chriſt was riſen againe, though it was told him at ſundrie times by diuers, that were very credible:

dible: we must therefore in the matter of faith giue credit vnto the word of God brought vnto vs, in the mouthes of his faithfull seruants, if they be but two or three. Secõdly, he in this case would beleeue none but himselfe: we must beleeue in the mysterie of our saluation others rather then our selues, and thinke especially that in the time of temptation others are able better to iudge of our estate, then we our selues can, and so be not too much addicted to our owne ouerweening.

Thirdly, he would beleeue nothing of this matter any further then himselfe was able to see and feele: now because these may deceiue vs, we must beleeue without any sight or feeling: especially seeing that faith is of things that are not seene, & the fauour of God is not alwaies sensible in his benefits, we must beleeue his word without: yea contrary to any

thing, that we can ſee or feele. Laſtly, he would not beleeue except he ſaw Chriſt with his wounds, and ſo in that forme, which ordinarily was not to be looked for: we therefore muſt not by vnbeleefe tie the teſtimonies of Gods fauour for the aſſurance of our faith vnto ſuch things as are vnreaſonable, and commonly not to be looked for: neither vnto any one particular thing, becauſe he hath many waies to confirme the ſame vnto vs: and pray him to giue vs grace, that we may profit in faith by any, that he ſhall beſtowe vpon vs.

And ſeeing it is ſo hard a thing to beleeue, & there is ſo much infidelitie hidden in the hearts of the beſt ſeruãts of God; let vs labour to ſearch into the depth of our owne, that finding the ſame in our ſelues, we may whiles we haue time vſe in feare all thoſe good meanes, that God hath appointed for the beginning and increaſe

creaſe of faith in vs, that ſo by his bleſſing we daily going on forward from faith to faith, we may at the laſt come to that meaſure of it, againſt which the very gates of hell be not able to preuaile: that ſo we may both in temptation, and vnder all croſſes, and in the howre of death, ſo carrie our ſelues, as God may be glorified, we our ſelues may be comforted, and others may be furthered by our Chriſtian calling, and good example: which Chriſt the author and finiſher of our faith grant vnto vs, for his owne name ſake: to whome with the father and the holy Spirit, one true, immortall, inuiſible, and onely wiſe God, be aſcribed as moſt due all honour, praiſe, and glory for euer and euer, Amen.

FINIS.

Errata.

Pag. 51. l. 15. for rather, read either. p. 53. l. 4. for The, This. p. 55. l. for note, roote. p. 65. l. 4. dele, not. p. 98. l. 10. for vse, inioy. p. 101. l. 7. for walke, wath. p. 108. l. 20. dele, that. p. 109. l. 7. deest, to. p. 119. l. *vlt.* for that, if. p. 120. l. 3. deest, to. p. 140. l. 11. for turning, curing.

A

TREATISE FVL OF CONSOLATION

for all that are afflicted in minde, *or bodie, or otherwiſe.*

Which armeth vs againſt impatiencie *vnder any croſſe.*

By NICOLAS BOVVNDE Doctor *of Diuinitie.*

Lament. Ierem. 4. 27.

It is good for a man, that he beare the yoke in his youth.

Printed by CANTRELL LEGGE, Printer to the Vniuerſitie of *Cambridge.* 1608.

To the right Worſhipfull Sir HENRIE WARNER Knight, and to *the vertuous Ladie* FRANCIS WARNER his Chriſtian and godly wife; *the daily increaſe of that true godlines,* that hath the promiſes of this *life, and of the life* to come.

RIght Worſhipfull Sir, in reſpect of your place indeede, ſome learned Treatiſe of Iuſtice might haue ſeemed more fitting: which if I had attempted, I could haue added nothing vnto that, which you daily practiſe, and haue done many yeares, to the great good of that part of our countrey, wherein God hath placed you. But yet, as you are a Chriſtian, and a profeſſor of the Goſpel, and ſo (euen in the multitude of Gods bleſsings, many waies, and plentifully powred out

vpon you) are subiect with all the rest of Gods children, vnto some afflictions and crosses; this argument, I hope, for the time present, or to come, may seeme not altogether vnseasonable. Seeing that the Lord hath saide, that if any man will
Matth.16.24 follow him, he must take vp his crosse and follow him. *And therefore that is it, which euery one must looke for, at one time or another, and in what kind it shall seeme best to his heauenly wisdome. For here I haue laboured, to shew out of the word of God, many reasons of the patient and comfortable bearing of the same. But whatsoeuer it be, it proceedeth from an heart vnfainedly well wishing vnto you: and so I pray you accept of it, as an apparant testimonie of the same.*

And for your selfe, good Madame, though your owne vertues and kindnes deserue much, God hauing put vpon you
Pro.16.31. *that* crowne of glorie, *that* Salomon *speaketh of, namely, that* your age is found in the way of righteousnes, e-

uen

uen in theſe moſt corrupt and dangerous times: yet the worthie memorie of M. Robert Foorth *ſometimes of Butly, Eſquire, heretofore* the guide of your youth, *your ſelfe beeing ioyned vnto him in the neereſt* couenant of God, *had beene ſufficient to mooue me among other his friends and allies, to ſhew what teſtimonie of loue I could vnto any of his.* Prou. 2 17.

Whoſe zeale to the Goſpel of Chriſt, and loue to all, that profeſſed it: with his ſinceritie in executing of iuſtice, heartie affection to all his neighbours; great hoſpitalitie and releefe to the poore, euen in the times of greateſt ſcarſitie and want; with moſt excellent orders in his family for daily praier, for reading the Scriptures, and for ſinging of Pſalmes, doe yet ſpeake for him, and ſhall whiles this age remaineth. Whoſe vprightneſſe of heart vnto God (*wherein he was* a right Nathanael, *euen* a true Iſraelite indeed) *I pray God, that all his right worſhipfull children, ſonnes and daughters may ſet before their* Ioh. 1. 47.

eyes,

eyes, as an example to follow.

And so praying God to blesse you both, with many comfortable daies together in this life, and eternall happines after death in the kingdome of heauen, neuer to be seuered: with the like blessing of God vpon the right worshipfull your children, and childrens children on both sides, I bid you all most humbly and heartily fare-well in Christ. Norton in Suff. Iun. 24. 1608.

Your Worships in all vnfained loue for Christs sake,

Nicolas Bownde.

Errata.

Pag 19.l 5 read, that God. 25.4. r. mixt thing. 27.20. r. distracted. 28 9. r. our selues. 33.16. r. infirmities. 42.20. *derst* are. 24. r. rich mercie. 47.11. r. want. 53.7. r. meaning. 57.18. r. fauour of God. 62 3. r. fearing. 99. 5. after man, put in colon.

A COMFORTABLE TREATISE for the afflicted.

Rom. 8. 26, &c.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what to pray as we ought: but the Spirit it self maketh request for vs with sighes, which cannot be expressed. 27 *But he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the meaning of the Spirit: for he maketh request for the Saints, according to the will of God.* 28 *Also we know that all things worke together for the best vnto them that loue God: euen to them that are called of his purpose.* 29 *For those whome he knew before, he also predestinate to be made like to the image of his Sonne, that he might be the first borne among many brethren, &c.*

THe generall intent and purpose of the Apostle here is, to intreat

of the matter of afflictions, to this ende, that he might ſhew, that none of them ſhall be able to hinder vs frō our ſaluation, that ſo beeing well perſwaded of them, and of the goodnes of God towards vs in them, we might be the better prepared for them, and haue more comfort in the bearing of them. For he hauing prooued before, that we are iuſtified & ſaued by faith in Chriſt, for the further aſſurance of all thoſe that relie vpon Chriſt for their ſaluation, he remooueth out of their minds, thoſe things that might ſeeme to weaken their faith herein.

And namely, firſt of all the conſideration of our naturall corruption, cleauing faſt vnto vs; hindering vs from that which is good, and drawing vs to that that is euill, euen after ſuch time, as we do beleeue: of which he hath ſpoken in the former chapter, ſaying, I allow not that which I doe: for what I would, that doe I not:

Rom. 7 15.

but

but what I hate, that do I. For I know that in me, that is, in my fleſh, dwelleth no good: for to will is preſent with me, but I finde no meanes to performe that that is good. For I doe not the good, that I would, but the euill that I would not, that doe I. I finde then, that when I would doe good, I am thus yoaked, that euill is preſent with me. For I delight in the law of God in the inner man. But I ſee an other law in my members rebelling againſt the law of my minde, and leading me captiue vnto the law of ſinne which is in my members. O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliuer mee from the bodie of this death!

For anſwer vnto which he ſaith, that by the imputation of the perfect holineſſe of our Sauiour Chriſt, the guiltines of this is taken away, and is not imputed vnto vs before the iudgment ſeat of God: and therefore he

verſ. 17. ſaith, it is no more I that doe it, but ſinne that dwelleth in me: for if I doe that I would not, it is no more I that doe it, but the ſinne that dwelleth in me: and therefore it ſhall not be laid
and 25. vnto my charge: for I my ſelfe in my minde ſerue the law of God: though in my fleſh I ſerue the law of ſinne: and therefore in the next chapter he breaketh out into this comfortable ſaying, and auoucheth it moſt confidently, that there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Ieſus,
Rom. 8. 1. which walke not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit.

And this communion and fellowſhip that herein we haue with Chriſt for the diſcharging of vs from the guilt of our naturall corruption, we know by two infallible tokens: the one is the Spirit of ſanctification, which we haue receiued from him, whereby it commeth to paſſe, that we walk not after the fleſh any more, but

but after the Spirit. For if the Spirit verſ. 11.
of him that raiſed vp Ieſus from the dead, dwell in vs: he that raiſed vp Chriſt from the dead, ſhall alſo quicken our mortall bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in vs: and therefore if 13.
we mortifie the deedes of the bodie by the Spirit, we ſhall liue: for as many as are lead by the Spirit of God, they are the ſonnes of God: and thus this ſanctification of ours, which is in ſinceritie and truth, though in much weaknes and great imperfection proceeding from the Spirit of God, is a ſure token that we are partakers of the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt to the perfect iuſtifying of vs in the ſight of God, and to the taking away of all the remnants of ſinne inhering & dwelling in vs continually.

The ſecond teſtimonie hereof is the Spirit of adoption, which he giueth vs, to aſſure vs of his fauour, and to deliuer vs from our feares in mea-

ſure, and to teach vs chearefully and comfortably to pray vnto God, as to our moſt merciful Father: for he ſaith
verſ. 15. that this ſpirit of ſanctification, is not the ſpirit of bondage, to feare again: which feare is wrought in vs by the ſight of our ſinnes through the miniſtery of the law: but it is the ſpirit of adoption, whereby we crie, Abba, Father, that is, it ſealeth vp our adoption in our mindes, and ſo openeth our mouthes in prayer vnto God: and therefore he addeth: that the ſame Spirit beareth witnes with our Spirits, that wee are the children of God: and if wee be children, wee are alſo heires, euen the heires of God, and heires annexed with Chriſt. Thus by the Spirit of adoption, which is diſcerned by this moſt excellent operation of his, that it cauſeth vs to pray in hope to God, as to our father, and to call him not once father after a faint manner, but twiſe

twiſe or thriſe; yea continually, Abba, father, or father, father: we know that we haue our part in Chriſt, for whoſe ſake onely he is our father, and ſo are by him deliuered from the guiltines of all the remnants of corruption & ſinne, though they are in our fleſh, and dwell there continually, as the Apoſtle ſaith: and doe ſhew themſelues both by vnbeleefe, and by hindring vs frõ doing of that good that we would, and cauſing vs to doe that euill that we would not.

Another thing whereby our faith is aſſaulted and often weakened, is the conſideration of thoſe manifold and grieuous afflictions which may and doe befal vs in this world; whereby it might ſeeme vnto vs, that our waies are not ſo acceptable vnto the Lord, that we might haue comfort in them. For anſwer vnto which, hee ſheweth, that of what nature or kind ſoeuer they be, they ſhall bee ſo farre

from hindering vs from the fauour of God,& from our ſaluation; as that in them wee haue Chriſt Ieſus, who went before vs in all our afflictions, further then wee can, and yet at the laſt came vnto glorie: and therefore if we patiently abide, as we haue not onely the Prophets, and Apoſtles, & Martyrs, and other holy men; but euen Chriſt himſelfe to be our fellow in them; ſo we ſhall be fellowes with him,& like vnto him in glorie: for he
16. ſaith, If ſo be that we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo be glorified with him.

And leaſt that it might ſeem grieuous vnto vs,to goe to ſo happie an eſtate through ſo grieuous & painfull a way, and ſo might thinke, that the kingdome of heauen, though it bee neuer ſo pretious in it ſelf, we ſhould buie it too deerely; he telleth vs aſſuredly, that by conſidering the afflictions of this world on the one ſide, and the felicitie of the kingdome of hea-

heauen on the other ſide, and ſo caſting vp the account of the one and the other, hee hath found the totall ſumme of them both to bee ſo farre differing, that all the afflictions of this miſerable and wretched world indured by any, and from the firſt houre of their birth, vnto their laſt breath, are not to bee compared in greatneſſe or continuance, vnto that glorie and happineſſe that ſhall there be reuealed and beſtowed vpon vs, according to the expreſſe wordes of the text: I count, or all things beeing well conſidered, I gather, that the afflictions of this preſent time, are not worthie of the glorie that ſhall be ſhewed vnto vs. Verſ. 18.

And as this glorie is thus great, ſo it is moſt ſure and certaine, though we doe not preſently enioy it; and therefore we need not in any wiſe to doubt of it: for all the other creatures of God, beſides man, which are vnreaſonable

reasonable and dumbe, haue in their kind a certaine sense and feeling of it; for though they bee now subiect, (and that yet but for a time) vnto this vanitie, that is, corruption and abuse, which they are in: yet by the instinct of nature they doe most earnestly, & as it were with their heads lifted vp, and neckes stretched out, that they might see a great way off, looke for the reuealing of the sonnes of God, that so they themselues also might then be redeemed from bondage into their glorious libertie; and they shall not bee disappointed of their hope. Therefore much more we that haue receiued the first fruits of the spirit, should with greater patience in trouble abide the will of God a while, and with more certaintie and earnestnesse of desire looke for an happy change of all our afflictions in that most glorious day.

Which the Apostle setteth out in much

much more patheticall and ſignificant wordes then I haue expreſſed, and therefore I could not paſſe them ouer; for he ſaith, The feruent deſire and 19.
of the creature, that is, of the whole frame of this world, and of all things in it, waiteth whē the ſonnes of God ſhall bee reuealed. 20. Becauſe the creature is ſubiect vnto vanitie, not of his owne will, or natural inclination, but by reaſon of him which hath ſubdued it vnder hope. For though hee did by his curſe vpon all the creatures, which he had made for man, ſhew how greatly he was diſpleaſed with the fall and ſinne of man, yet he would giue them hope to be reſtored: and therefore he addeth, 21. For the creature alſo ſhall be deliuered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious libertie of the ſonnes of God. For we know that euery creature groaneth with vs alſo, and trauaileth in paine together vnto this pre-

preſent: as a woman with child, not onely with exceeding ſorrowe, but with hope of a comfortable deliuerance in time. And not onely the creatures, but we alſo which haue the firſt fruits of the Spirit, euen we doe ſigh in our ſelues, waiting for the adoption euen the redemption of our owne bodies, that is, our laſt reſtoring, when as our adoption ſhall be fully accompliſhed in ſoule and bodie.

Which condition of ours in affliction, though grieuous for a time, but moſt happie in the ende, that we might not refuſe to vndergoe, with the reſt of the creatures, and our brethren & ſiſters: he calleth vs to conſider the wiſe order which God hath appointed in ſauing of vs, which is
verſ. 24. by hope: for he ſaith, We are ſaued by hope, but hope that is ſeene is not hope: for how can a man hope for that he ſeeth, but if we hope for that

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we ſee not, we doe with patience abide for it. Therefore we muſt not imagine ſo ſoone to iniey all happineſſe, as we beleeue it: but be content to want all things for a time: that hoping for them with patience & long-ſuffering, we might come to them at laſt: vnleſſe we will goe about to inuert this excellent order, which the Lord hath determined and appointed to be in ſauing vs; which is by trayning vs vp in the hope and expectation of all things promiſed for a ſeaſon.

But now becauſe the hope that is deferred, is the fainting of the heart, as *Salomon* ſaith, that is, it maketh a man ſick at the very heart, to be long deferred of that that we deſire and hope for: & therefore we might feare both in reſpect of our own weaknes, and alſo the greatnes, together with the long continuance of affliction, that we ſhould not with patience vn-

Prou. 13. 12.

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der the croſſe continue to hold out happily vnto the ende: he further addeth for our ſingular comfort, that the Spirit, which we haue receiued, whereby we are ſanctified, and whereby we pray to God, as to our Father, ſhall performe this office alſo vnto vs, that it ſhall helpe to beare the burden of our affliction with vs; and ſo though we be neuer ſo weake, yet being ſupported by the power of it, we ſhall bee able to endure them well enough: for hee ſaith, Likewiſe the ſpirit alſo helpeth our infirmities. Rom. 8. 26.

So that it ſhall be all one with vs, as with a young childe, vpon whoſe ſhoulder the father laying a heauie burden, which of it ſelfe were able to preſſe him downe to the ground; hee ſhould ſo put his hand vnder it, that hee ſhould beare the whole waight almoſt and ſtreſſe of it himſelfe, and ſo he ſhould make him carry it. Now if the earthly father wil not of his naturall

urall affection ouerlade the poore childe, then wee neede not to feare, but that the Lord our ſpiritual father will ſo increaſe our ſtrength, according to the meaſure of our afflictiõs, that we ſhall find this promiſe to be true by experience, That his holy ſpirit ſhall helpe our infirmities.

And thus *Dauid* commendeth the mercie of God vnto vs, That as a father hath compaſſion on his childrẽ, ſo hath the Lord compaſſion on thẽ that feare him: he knoweth whereof we be made, he remembreth that we be but duſt: where hee rendreth this one reaſon of the merciful dealing of God towards vs, euen the knowledge that he hath of our weake and fraile eſtate; which thing, as it is moſt comfortable to conſider, ſo we ſhall finde it to be moſt true by experience; becauſe our Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt hath praied for vs, as himſelfe witneſſeth in the Goſpel, vnto his heauenly father, Pſ. 103. 13.

ther, that he would giue vs a comfor-
Ioh.14.16. ter that might abide with vs for euer;
euen the spirit of truth, whom the
world cannot receiue.

And the blessed Apostle confes-
seth of himselfe, that he was partaker
of the fruit of this praier; for beeing
in many afflictions that were able to
haue ouercom him, yet by the power
of Gods spirit, he did hold out hap-
2.Cor.4.9. pily in them: saying, Wee are afflic-
ted on euery side, yet are wee not in
distresse; we are in doubt, but we de-
spaire not; we are persecuted, but not
forsaken; we are cast downe, but wee
perish not: Euery where we beare a-
bout in our bodie the dying of the
lord Iesus, that the life of Iesus might
also be made manifest in our bodies;
for we which liue, are alwaies deliue-
red vnto death for Iesus sake, that the
life also of Iesus might bee made ma-
nifest in our bodies. Where he com-
pareth the miserable estate and con-

dition

tion that the faithfull, and more ſpecially the Miniſters are in, vnto a continuall dying, and the vertues of the ſpirit of God in them vnto life, which oppreſſeth that death: & he rendreth this reaſon, why the Lord doth thus often afflict his ſeruants, namly, That the excellencie of that power might be of God, and not of vs, that is, that all men might perceiue howe they ſtood not by mans power, but by the ſingular vertue of God, in that they die a thouſand deaths, but neuer periſh: and ſo in many daungers as hee defendeth them, ſo in much weakenes he vpholdeth them, and his Spirit helpeth their infirmities. verſ. 7.

And this grace of God alſo vpholding him in great weakneſſe againſt moſt dangerous temptations he acknowledgeth in an other place: for when he felt himſelfe ſo ſore troubled with them to his continuall grief, as if he had had a pricke thruſt into chap. 12. 7.

his flesh; and the messenger of Satan did so molest him, as though he had beene most shamefully buffetted on the face: for which he besought the Lord thrise, that is, very often, that it might depart from him: he receiued
verſ. 9. this answer from God, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my power is made perfect through weaknes. So in this spirituall combate, the Spirit of God did vphold him against the temptations of Satan, and of his own corruption: and so he concludeth, that when he was weake, then was he strong: that is, in his greatest weaknesse he felt the power of God vpholding him; and so shall wee, if wee waite vpon him.

For the Apostle sheweth that this which hee found by experience in himselfe, by the goodnes and mercie of God, belongeth to all the rest of the faithfull, when he writeth thus to
1. Cor. 10. 13 the *Corinthians*: God is faithful, which will

will not ſuffer you to bee tempted aboue that you be able, but will euen giue the iſſue with the temptation, that you may bee able to beare it: where he ſaith, The God that would haue vs tempted for our good, wil by his ſpirit ſo ſtrengthen vs, that wee ſhall be able to beare them, and haue an happie iſſue out of them. And if there were no Scripture to prooue it, our owne experience might tell vs the truth of it; for if wee haue obſerued any thing, wee may remember that many times wee haue beene brought very lowe, and haue vndergone ſuch hard brunts, that wee thought we ſhould neuer haue beene able to haue borne them. Neither indeede ſhould we, but that there was another thing in vs, farre aboue our ſelues, which did helpe vs, and cauſed vs both to indure, and to ouercome thoſe things, which we thoght wee ſhould haue fainted in the mid-

deſt of them: and ſo we may boldly ſay with this holy Apoſtle, Bleſſed be
2.Cor.1.3. God, euen the father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, the father of mercies and God of all comforts; which comforteth vs in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them that be in affliction, with the comfort wherwith we our ſelues are comforted of God. For as the ſufferings of Chriſt abound in vs, ſo our conſolation aboundeth through Chriſt.

Thus the Lord increaſeth the comforts of his Spirit in his ſeruants according to their afflictions, ſo that they doe not onely equall them, but alſo exceede them in time: and ſo beeing ſupported by the Spirit, they are able to beare them. And this promiſe of God, that his Spirit ſhall helpe vs in our infirmities, is ſo much the more worthie to be conſidered of vs, becauſe it is ſo generall, that it ſhall helpe vs; not in ſome few onely, but

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in all our infirmities whatſoeuer: for he ſpeaketh indefinitly, and not limiteth the promiſe to any one. So that there can be no weakeneſſe in vs ſo great, or infirmities ſo many vpon vs, in which the Spirit ſhal not ſtrēgthen vs, euen to the bearing of the greateſt croſſe, that God ſhall lay vpon vs; as we haue ſeene it in the Apoſtle before, who ſaid, that God did comfort him in all his tribulations, and his conſolations in Chriſt did abound, euen as his ſufferings did abound.

But in the meane ſeaſon *Paul* giueth vs to vnderſtand, that the afflictions of Gods children are oftentimes ſo great, that they farre paſſe any ſtrength that is in vs to beare thē; and that we are not able to doe it of our ſelues: yea, that we are very weak of our ſelues, and ſubiect to many infirmities, though we haue receiued the Spirit of ſanctification, and of a-

doption: for the ſame Spirit doth not cleane ridde vs of them, whiles wee are in this world, but doth onely help vs in them: according to the expreſſe words of the Apoſtle, Likewiſe the Spirit alſo helpeth our infirmities. In ſo much that he confeſſeth not onely of other the faithfull, but alſo of the Apoſtles, and of himſelfe, in whoſe name he ſpeaketh, and ioyneth himſelfe with them, that they were not able to haue vndergone ſo many and great things, as they did, being fraile men like vnto vs, but that they had the Spirit helping them in their infirmities: for hee doth not ſay, that the Spirit helpeth your weaknes, but vs, that are the ſtrongeſt, and helpeth vs in our infirmities: then no man muſt thinke to be free from them, it is and muſt be ſufficient for vs that the Spirit doth helpe vs in them.

The truth of which may likewiſe appeare in the great complaint of

Dauid,

Dauid, Iob, and the reſt of Gods ſeruants, who though they did patiently beare many great things, yet not without the bewraying of many great infirmities in themſelues: for *Iob* though he be commended vnto vs as a moſt tried patterne of all patience; yet how many and great infirmities appeared in him it is euident, when he thus cried out againſt himſelfe, Let the day periſh, wherein I was borne, and the night when it was ſaid, there is a man child conceiued: let that day be darkneſſe, let not God regard it from aboue, neither let the light ſhine vpon it: and why died I not in the birth? or why died I not when I came out of the womb? why did the knees preuent me? and why did I ſucke the breaſts? and many more ſuch bitter wordes proceeding from great weakneſſe he vttered againſt himſelfe. And *Dauid*, though he was a man after Gods own heart, Iob 3.3. 1.Sam.13 13

1.Sam. 13.13. and did beare many afflictions vnder *Saul* with great patience; yet in many Pſal.31.22. Pſalmes he bewraieth great infirmities: I ſaid in mine haſt, I am caſt out of thy ſight; he acknowledgeth his infidelitie to be ſuch, that he did raſhly ſay that God had cleane forſaken him: and in an other place he ſpeaketh thus of himſelfe; I ſaide in my & 116.11. feare, All men are lyars, that is, he ſaid in his temptation, that *Samuel* the Prophet, when he told him, that hee ſhould bee King of Iſrael, did not ſpeake it from God by the ſpirit of propheſie, but of his owne head, and ſo did but lie and diſſemble with him.

Therefore we are not to imagine of ſuch a portion of Gods Spirit, that might ſwallow vp all our infirmities, and cleane ridde vs of them, (for then we ſhould be no men) but it muſt be ſufficient, that we are aided with the ſtrength of it, ſo that we finally fall

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not downe, and lie ſtil vnder the heauie burden of affliction, yeilding to our infirmities, and ſo ouercome of them: ſo that there is a next thing, as it were in vs; namely, our owne infirmities to humble vs, and the ſtrength of Gods Spirit to inable vs to beare our afflictions. So that hauing ſo ſtrong and ſo able an helper, to beare with vs the burden, we may be comforted with hope of induring the greateſt thing, that may befall vs in this world, though continuing vpon vs neuer ſo long. Not indeed alwaies in that manner, that we ought, and doe deſire, but ſo as it may be acceptable vnto God, and ſo farre forth as his holy Spirit ſhall helpe vs in our infirmities: for though there be nothing in vs but infirmities, yet there is helpe for vs from the Spirit of God.

And that we might euen in our infirmities, by the helpe of the Spirit of God

God beare all afflictions as we ought, the Apostle further addeth, that the same Spirit shall likewise stirre vs vp in all necessities of ours, to pray vnto God for helpe, and for his grace, and to make our moane vnto him, as to our father, and we shall be heard of him therin, saying, For we know not what to pray as wee ought: but the Spirit it selfe maketh request for vs with sighes, which cannot be expressed: but he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the meaning of the Spirit: for he maketh request for the Saints, according to the will of God. Where we see, both what great infirmities we be subiect vnto, and also how the Spirit of God helpeth vs in the same. For sometimes through the greatnesse of our miserie, we know not what to say, or howe to pray to God as we ought: and yet then his Spirit doth stirre vp in vs, though not many wel ordered speches or words;

Rom. 8. 26.

yet

yet thoſe ſighes and groanes which beeing vnſpeakable, and not felt of them, in whom they are, are well vnderſtood and accepted of God, becauſe they proceede from his ſpirit, whoſe meaning he knoweth & granteth, becauſe it maketh requeſt for the Saints according to the will of God.

Wherein we are firſt of all to cõſider, that though wee haue receiued the ſpirit of God, euen the ſpirit of adoption, whereby we crie Abba, Father, which ſpirit teacheth vs to pray, and by which wee haue many times called vpon God with great aſſurance and comfort, both for and with our ſelues and others alſo; yet there may be a time, & that very often, wherein wee may be ſo diſmorted by ſome great affliction, and in ſuch a caſe, that beeing as it were aſtoniſhed and ouercome with the greatneſſe and ſtrangeneſſe of it, wee can-

cannot well tel what to pray, or what to aske of God. And though prayer at such a time especially be our only refuge, according to the saying of the
Psal. 50. 15. Prophet, Call vpon me in the day of trouble, so wil I deliuer thee: yet we cannot tell how to begin, and what to say. And so vnlike shall we bee vnto our Father, and to that that wee haue beene in times past, as though wee were not the same: nay, our estate may seeme to bee like vnto the wicked, who are at their wits ende, and know not how to pray vnto God at all. For if we were asked then, what we would haue, we cannot make a direct answer; and though we haue libertie to aske of God according to our neede, yet wee cannot vse it: for we cannot tell what to pray.

O what a wonderfull thing is this! but yet most true; and that which is to be found not in some fewe meane persons onely, that are ignorant, and haue

haue not accuſtomed themſelues to prayer; but in the moſt excellent ſeruants of God, euen the Apoſtles thẽſelues; as *Paul* here bringeth himſelfe in with the reſt for an example, and in this great infirmitie maketh himſelfe like vnto the reſt, ſaying; For we know not what to pray as we ought. And though there be many excellẽt praiers in the old & new Teſtament, by which wee might learne how to pray; and eſpecially wee haue a perfect forme of prayer preſcribed by our Sauiour Chriſt to direct vs in all things needfull for vs: yet in temptation wee aske thoſe things many times, which if we had them, would bee hurtfull vnto vs: and when wee doe aske that that is profitable and good, yet euen then by preſcribing vnto the Lord the time when, & the manner how, and the meanes whereby wee would bee deliuered, according to our owne minde, wee pray with

with ſuch impatience and diſtruſt, that it may be truely ſaid of vs, Wee cannot tell what to pray as wee ought.

This was the eſtate of that good King *Hezekiah*, when he was ſicke vnto death; at what time beeing greatly pained in his body, and ſore troubled in his minde, and out of all hope of life, he turned his face vnto the wall, and praied vnto the Lord; but how? hee doth expreſſe it in theſe words: Eſa. 38. 14. Like a Crane or a Swallow ſo did I chatter, I did mourne as a doue: that is, in the bitterneſſe of his ſoule hee did not vſe many words; yea, hee was altogether ſo confuſed, that his prayer was like the chattering of birdes, he knew not almoſt what to ſay.

Such was the perplexitie & more then infirmitie of *Dauid*, when as in his great afflictions, inſtead of praying, he roared all the day long, as hee Pſal. 32. 3. ſaith of himſelfe; When I helde my tongue,

tongue, my bones conſumed, and vvhen I roared all the day: ſo that ſometimes he held his peace, beeing betvveen hope and deſpaire, and ſometimes he vttered many deſires; but beeing carried avvay vvith the preſent feeling of his aduerſitie, they vvere more like the roarings of a vvilde beaſt, then any vvell ordered prayer. And at another time he ſaith, Mine heart trembleth vvithin me, & the horrors of death are fallen vpon me: feare and trembling are come vpon me, and an horrible feare hath couered me: in vvhich vvords, hee ſhevveth in vvhat infirmity & vveakneſſe he vvas then fallen into: & for his prayers, after vvhat manner they vvere framed, hee declareth in theſe vvordes; I mourne in my prayer and make a noiſe, ſo that there vvas mourning and ſome kinde of noiſe, and little elſe. And another time hee expreſſeth his outvvard eſtate, & the

Pſal. 55. 4.

Verſ. 2.

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inward affection of his mind, and the maner of his prayer then, after this
Psalm. 3. sort. My daies are cōsumed like smoak, & my bones are burnt like an herth: mine heart is smitten and withered like grasse, because I forgat to eate my bread: for the voice of my groaning my bones doe cleaue to my skinne. I am like a Pellican of the wilderneſſe, and am like an owle of the desarts. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone vpon the house top. Surely I haue eaten ashes as bread, and mingled my drinke with weeping: By which kind of speeches he shreweth how greatly his affliction did worke vpon him, so that in them he did groane and weepe, and cast out many fearefull cries, but all things were so out of order in his praier, that they were like the chattering of a Pelican and of a sparrow, and the skreeks of an owle, rather then any thing els, if God had considered them in his iu-

stice,

ſtice, and ſo he might haue reiected them.

Thus wee ſee, that theſe moſt excellent ſeruants of God in their greateſt conflicts and agonies, were ſo farre from beeing able to pray vnto God in any tolerable manner, that in their own ſenſe and feeling they did but roare & crie, ſob and ſigh, weepe, mourne and complaine; and that alſo very confuſedly, euen like the Crane, the Swallow, the Pellican, the Sparrow, euen the ſhreeke Owle it ſelfe: ſo diſtracted were they in theſelues, and full of diſorder, and fallen into ſo many great diſorders at once. Therefore we may not iudge of our ſelues, or of others, by any one ſuch accident, or few particular caſes, leaſt we ſhould deceiue our ſelues, ſaying, I haue not the ſpirit of God, for I cannot pray nor call vpon God in mine affliction; and if I doe at any time, it is not as I ought: for this is that

which *Paul* confeſſeth of himſelfe, & of other the ſeruants of God, and which wee haue ſeene in theſe two excellent Kings, *Hezekiah* and *Dauid*, that in affliction oftentimes we cannot tell what to pray as we ought.

But yet in this great vnfitneſſe of ours, we muſt not be like to the wicked, who then giue ouer all prayer, becauſe they are vnfit for it: and we are ſubiect vnto this temptation, to put off praier, becauſe we ſee that we cannot pray as we ought, and ſo wee are made to thinke, that wee ſhould offend God in praier. But wee muſt then ſtriue earneſtly againſt this infirmitie of ours, and ſo pray to God that we might pray; and as the Diſciples ſaid vnto Chriſt, Lord teach vs to pray; ſo let vs deſire the Lord to giue vs his good ſpirit of prayer: which if we will doe, no doubt wee ſhall find his promiſe to be true, that then The ſpirit of God in vs ſhall make

Luk.11.1.

Rom.8.26.

make requeſt for vs. For as our Sauiour Chriſt comforteth his Diſciples in an other caſe, ſeeing that they ſhould bee brought before the Gouernours and Kings for his ſake: But when they deliuer you vp, take no thought how, or what you ſhall ſpeake, for it ſhal be giuen you in that houre, what you ſhall ſay; for it is not you that ſpeake, but the ſpirit of your Father that ſpeaketh in you: Euen ſo wee ſhall finde by experience, that when we are moſt vnfit to pray, if we will not yeeld to this infirmitie and ſlothfulneſſe, but ſtriue againſt it, there ſhall be a ſecret inward working in vs, whereby we ſhall bee ſtirred vp to doe ſomething; and there ſhall be a labour of the heart, and an endeauour of the minde, aſpiring vnto that which we may ſeeme not to attaine vnto: and there ſhall be many ſighings, though few words; many great deſires, though fewe voices: Math. 10. 19.

yea, there shall bee that which wee cannot greatly cõceiue of our selues, and euery thing shall be vnspeakable: according to the saying of the Apostle, That when we know not what to pray as we ought, the spirit of God shall make request for vs, with sighes which cannot be expressed.

For no doubt these men that we spake of before, *Hezekiah* and *Dauid*, euen at those times, when they could not tell what and how to pray of thẽselues; yet the Spirit of God helping their infirmities, they did pray in some good acceptable manner, and there were at the least vnspeakeable sighs and groanes stirred vp in them: for it is said of *Hezekiah*, that he then turned his face to the wall, and praied to the Lord: and afterwards it is said, The Lord did heare his prayer. And *Dauid*, when as in his owne feeling he did but roare and sigh, and mourne; as he saith, I goe mourning all the day,

2.king. 20.3.

Psal.38.6.

day, I roare for the griefe of mine heart: yet then hee made his desires knowne vnto the Lord in prayer, and poured them out very plentifully before him. And when hee did but mourne and make a noise, he desireth the Lord to hearken vnto him, and to answer him: and when he saith, that his groanings were like the Pellicans, and the sparrows, & the shrike owles, yet to shew, that in them there was a worke of Gods spirit, which made them acceptable to God, hee beginneth the Psalme thus: O Lord, heare my praier, & let my crie come vnto thee: incline thine eares vnto me, when I call make hast to heare me. And to shew that his example in thus praying was for the instruction and comfort of the Church, it is thus intituled, A praier of the afflicted, when he shal be in distresse, & powre out his meditation before the Lord: Shewing not onely that the afflicted

and 55.2.

and 102.1.

in their distresse doe thus pray, but that the Lord heareth them therein, and graunteth their desire.

And thus is it saide of the whole Church of God in Egypt, at what time, as they were greatly oppressed, so that they grewe wearie of their liues, by sore labour in clay, and in bricke, and in all worke in the fielde, with all manner of bondage, which was laid vpon them most cruelly; so there was great ignorance and much weakenesse among them, and therefore not knowing well many of them how to pray to God, They sighed to God for the bondage, and cried; and their crie for the bondage came vnto God, and he heard their moane, and looked vpon them, and had respect vnto them: and hee said vnto Moses, I haue surely seene the trouble of my people, and haue heard their crie, for I know their sorrowes, therfore I am come down to deliuer them.

Exod. 1. 14.

Chap. 2. 23 & 3. 7.

This

This is then a moſt notable comfort in all afflictions, that wee beleeuing in Chriſt, and made thereby partakers of his holy ſpirit, it ſhall ſo helpe vs in all our infirmities, that when we cannot tell what, or how to pray as we ought, it ſhall teach vs ſo to doe it, as wee may haue hope and comfort of beeing heard. For this is that which *Paul* addeth in the next verſe, That hee that ſearcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the meaning of the Spirit; for he maketh requeſt for the Saints according to the will of God. Where by knowing, he doth not onely meane that he vnderſtandeth it, as hee doth all other things; but he accepteth and alloweth of it, and doth moſt willingly graunt ſuch requeſts, as though they were made in farre better liking to our ſelues: & ſo is the word taken in the firſt Pſalme, where the Prophet ſaith, The Lord knoweth the way of the righ-

Rom. 8. 27.

Pſal. 1. 6.

righteous, that is, hee doth make account of them, approoue, and allowe of them, regard and proſper them.

For as wee haue ſeene euen now, hee heard the crie of the Iſraelites, when they did but ſigh & make their moane, and did deliuer them from their cruell bondage; & he did heare king *Hezekiah* chattering in his praier like a Crane, and raiſed him vp from death, and added fifteen yeares more vnto his life; and to confirme him therein, hee brought againe the ſhadow tenne degrees backe, by the degrees whereby it had gone downe in the diall of *Ahaz*. And hee heard *Dauid* when he roared for the extremitie of his paine, and forgaue the puniſhment of his ſinne; that is, forgaue him his ſinne, and remooued the puniſhment thereof. And wee may remember our ſelues, if we haue marked any thing, how the Lord hath heard vs many times in our

2. Kj. 20. 11

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greateſt need, when we haue howled and cried, rather then made any ſetled and well ordered prayer: yea, when we haue rather moaned then ſpoken, rather ſighed then vttered a word. For the Lord in this caſe regardeth not ſo much the multitude of wordes, as he looketh to the meaning of his ſpirit, and granteth that, though they ſpeake neuer a word.

For euen as a father or mother hauing a young infant ſicke of ſome ſore diſeaſe, though the childe cannot ſpeake and call for this and that, yet they are readie to helpe it; and if it be elder, and can ſpeake, yet being full of paine, it cannot call for things as it ought: neuertheleſſe, if they can by any ſignes gueſſe at the meaning of it, they will accept as much of it, as though the childe had ſpoken very diſtinctly, and vſed many words: Euen ſo the Lord, who is infinitely filled with the bowels of compaſſion

towards

towards vs in Chriſt, farre aboue any father or mother; inſomuch as the
Iſa.49. 15. Lord ſaith, Can a woman forget her childe, and not haue compaſſion on the ſonne of her wombe? though they ſhould forget, yet will not I forget thee: though hee delighteth to heare vs pray to him, as Chriſt himſelfe witneſſeth to his Church, ſaying, My doue, ſhew me thy ſight, let
Cant. 2. 14. me heare thy voice; for thy voice is ſweete, and thy ſight comely: yet when by the extremities of our miſeries wee are ſo oppreſſed or diſtracted, that wee cannot in any orderly manner pray vnto him as we ought; yet he alloweth of the ſighes & ſobs that we offer vp vnto him, and granteth not ſo much our wordes (which ſometimes none or very fewe) as the meaning of his ſpirit, which is large and plentifull in vs.

And hereupon it commeth to paſſe, that the Lord in his ~~inf~~ mercie impu-

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imputeth not vnto his ſeruants the manifold rebellions of their fleſh, or great complaints in their praier; as hee did not vnto *Iob* nor to *Dauid*, who were full of them, as wee haue ſeene before; becauſe he hath reſpect vnto the meaning of his ſpirit in thē: As the mother is not ſo much grieued or offended with the murmurings, impatiencie, and froward outcries of her poore ſicke childe; as ſhe by the leaſt token gueſſeth at the meaning of him, and taketh that in good part, and giueth to him accordingly.

What ſhall we ſay to theſe things? Is it true indeede, that the Lord will vouchſafe to looke vpon the low degree of his ſeruants; and haue reſpect vnto poore ſinnefull creatures, who when they are fallen into the bottom of their iuſt deſerued miſerie, and euen then can not pray vnto him one word aright; and when they begin

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to ſpeake vnto him, euen then their tongue cleaueth to the roofe of their mouth; that he will yet heare their ſighs, and their cries? yea vndoubtedly, he that of his great mercie will beare with ſuch great weakneſſe in men, that he will not breake a bruiſed reede, nor quench the ſmoking flaxe; he will of the like mercie heare, not onely the well ordered prayers of his Church, but euen the very cryings & roarings of his ſeruants, though they be like the Pellicans and the owles: yea their mournings, though they be like to the doues: yea, when they ſay nothing, neither indeed can, their very ſobs and ſighs, which come frō the abundance of a troubled ſpirit, and can not be expreſſed: for he alloweth of the meaning of his Spirit, which worketh theſe things in them: and if they could, thereby they are willing to performe better ſeruice vnto him, and are ſorie that they can not

Matt. 12. 20.

not doe it. What can be more comfortable vnto vs, then this?

Therefore in all our neceſſities let vs goe vnto the Lord in Chriſt with great boldneſſe, and come vnto the throne of grace: and though we can not vtter many wordes, yet let vs ſpeake vnto him: for ſurely the acceptation of our praiers conſiſteth not in the multitude or well placing of our words, but in the requeſt and deſire of our hearts: and therefore if we can pray but two or three words, & ſay with the poore Publican, Lord, be merciful vnto me a ſinner; or with the Apoſtles, Lord increaſe our faith; or with the man in the Goſpel, Lord I beleeue, Lord help mine vnbeleef; or with the blind man, O ſon of Dauid haue mercy vpon me; or with the theefe vpon the croſſe, Lord remember me in thy kingdome, &c. this ſhort prayer proceeding from the Spirit of God in vs, and offered vp in the

Luk. 18. 13. & 17. 5. Mar. 9. 24. Matt. 9. 29. Luk. 23. 42.

the mediation of Chriſt Ieſus, and in the vertue of his prayers, ſhall be as well receiued of him, when we can doe no better, as if we had ſpent an whole houre in prayer.

Yea, if we do but lift vp our minds vnto God, and pray in our ſpirite, though we vtter not one word, as
1.Sam.1.10 that godly woman *Hannah* the mother of *Samuel* did; who beeing troubled in her minde praied vnto the Lord, and wept ſore: but how did ſhee pray? ſhee ſpake in her heart, her lips did mooue onely, but her voice was not heard: The Lord will heare vs, as he did her, and giue her according to her deſire: as ſhee afterward confeſſed to *Heli* the Prieſt: I praied for this child, and the Lord hath giuen me my deſire, which I asked of him. And ſo did *Nehemiah* pray vnto God, for he waiting vpon the King of Babylon as hee ſate at table, and beeing ſad in his preſence more then

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he had wont to be, the King demanded of him the cauſe, & he told him: then hauing leaue of the King to ask what he would for the accompliſhing of his deſire; it is ſaide that hee praied to the God of heauen: that is, Nehe. 2.4. he lifted vp his mind vnto God, and deſired him to bleſſe him in that enterpriſe of his, and ſo he did. So we if either we can not pray in words, or waite opportunity of time and place, and doe but ſigh vnto him after an vnſpeakeable manner, the Lord will not refuſe that, becauſe it proceedeth from his Spirit.

And as this may be no ſmall comfort vnto vs in our affliction, ſo the Apoſtle *Paul* in the next verſe following doth for our further comfort ſhew what is the ende of all the afflictions of the children of God; namely, their benefit and good, whē he ſaith, Alſo we know that al things Rom. 8 28. worke together for the beſt to them that

that loue God, euen to them that are called of his purpose. In which words he ministreth this soueraigne medicine against the contagion & poison of all affliction, telling vs, that they come to the beleeuers not for their hurt, but for their singular good; especially seeing they befall them not by fortune or chance, but by the speciall prouidence of God, and that for the same ende: who as he hath chosen them from euerlasting, so in the same counsell of his he ordained that they should in their crosses bee like
Vers. 29. vnto his sonne. For those whom hee knew before, hee also predestinate to be made like to the image of his son, that he might bee the first borne of many brethren: and therefore hee calleth them in time, iustifieth them by faith, and by the crosse bringeth them to eternall glorie, as he did his owne naturall sonne: as it is said in
30. the next words, Moreouer, whom he prede-

predestinated, them also he called; & whome he called, them also he iustified; and whome he iustified, them also he glorified.

Whereupon he boldly concludeth, that no affliction shall be able to hurt them, seeing that the Lord is with them in the same, meaning thereby to doe them good: for he speaketh after a most confident maner, What shall we then say to these things? if 31.
God be on our side, who can be against vs? as if he had said, seeing that God is with vs in all our afflictions by his prouidence and power, and by the assistance of his holy Spirit, none of them shall be able to doe vs any harme. And the truth of Gods loue and meaning towards vs this way, he confirmeth by a most excellēt proof, when he addeth, Who spared not 32.
his owne Sonne, but gaue him for vs all to death, how shall he not with him giue vs all things also? In which

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words he sheweth, that we haue no cause to feare, no, not in any crosse, that the Lord will not giue vs whatsoeuer is profitable for vs, seeing that he hath not spared his owne Sonne to saue vs.

Therfore when he saith, All things worke together for the best to them that feare God, it is most true, whether we take it generally, as the words may be expounded, namely, not onely prosperitie but aduersitie also, not onely health but sicknes, not onely libertie but imprisonment, not onely honour but dishonour; make for the best to those that loue God. Or whether it be restrained to this particular purpose of his; namely, to affliction of what nature or kind so euer. It is no doubt the intent of the Apostle to speake of this latter, and to shew, that all afflictions doe not onely not hinder the saluation of the godly, but doe greatly further the same.

ſame. Which ſaying of his, though it containeth an whole and entire matter by it ſelfe, yet beeing inferred vpon the former wordes, he ſeemeth therein to anſwer a ſecret obiection, which might ariſe in mens mindes from thence; namely, that it ſeemeth many times that the Lord doth not heare the praiers of the afflicted, becauſe their afflictions be not onely not remooued, according to their praiers, but ſomtimes increaſed contrarie to their earneſt deſire.

Therefore wee muſt remember, what hath beene alreadie ſaid touching this matter, namly, how the Lord in graunting our requeſts, looketh not ſo much to the particular things which we deſire, as to the meaning of his Spirit in vs: and granteth that, in turning our afflictions to our ſingular good: wheras if they were preſently remooued, the Lord ſeeth that it would be far worſe with vs, though

we imagine the contrarie. For as if one in a burning feauer ſhould in the middeſt of his fit impatiently deſire to be waſhed with colde water; and then the skilfull Phyſitian ſtanding by, beeing his friend alſo ſhould giue him ſome wholeſome conſerues or other cooling thing, hee ſhould in denying that particular thing demãded, graunt vnto his generall meaning, which was, that he might haue ſome thing giuen him, that might do him moſt good, though now beeing diſtẽpered, he was not able to iudge of it, but did miſtake one thing for an other, and thought that to be beſt, as to be plunged into the colde water, which indeede is the worſt: So wee whatſoeuer we aske in our diſtreſſe by praier vnto God, our meaning is and muſt be, if it be ruled by Gods ſpirit, that we would haue that giuen vnto vs, which might procure our beſt good, and further our ſaluation moſt

moſt of all. Therefore if the Lord ſuffer our croſſes to remaine, and turne them to our good, though we in particular praied for the cleane taking of them away, hee fulfilleth both theſe promiſes vnto vs at once; namely, he giueth vs according to the meaning of his ſpirit in vs; and hee alſo cauſeth them to worke together for the beſt to thoſe that loue God.

Thus then *Paul* beſought the Lord thrice, that is, very often, that the meſſenger of Satan might depart from him; and yet the Lord ſuffered him ſtil to buffet the Apoſtle, leaſt he ſhould bee exalted out of meaſure, through the aboundance of reuelations that were giuen vnto him: and the Lord gaue him this further anſwer, that his grace ſhould be ſufficient for him to vphold and ſtrengthen him, and that the power of God ſhould be ſeen in the Apoſtles weakneſſe. The Lord in denying this re- 2. Cor. 12. 8.

queſt of his, did giue him according to the meaning of his ſpirit in him, which was, that the Lord would deale with him this way, as it ſhould make moſt for his owne glorie, and for the furtherance of *Pauls* ſaluation; and alſo did cauſe this affliction to worke together with other things for his beſt good; for this did him more good remaining, then if it had beene taken away: for hereby he had more experience of his owne weakeneſſe, and of the power of God, then otherwiſe he could haue had.

And thus alſo the Lord hath verified from time to time vnto the reſt of his ſeruants the truth of that promiſe of his, which is vttered by the
Pro. 10. 24. mouth of the Prophet *Salomon*, God will fulfill the deſire of the righteous; that is, God will not onely bleſſe thoſe that ſerue him, but hee will beſtowe thoſe bleſſings vpon the moſt of all, which they eſpecially deſire,

and

and do moſt earneſtly pray vnto him for: according to that that is ſaid in the Pſalme, Hee will fulfill the deſire of them that feare him. Which promiſes are ſo to bee vnderſtood, not that he will alwaies giue them euery particular thing that they aske, for many times through ignorance, or beeing diſtempered with ſome tẽptation, they aske that that is hurtfull, and then God denieth them: but he giueth them ſome other thing that is more profitable for them, according to the generall meaning of the ſpirit of God in them. And ſo doe parents vnto their little children, whom they loue full dearely, when they aske kniues and ſuch hurtfull things, in ſtead of them, they in wiſedome giue them ſome other thing that they ſhall delight in as much; and ſo ſtill their frowardneſſe, and giue them their deſire in another kind. Pſal. 145. 19.

Euen ſo the Lord fulfilleth the de-

ſire of his ſeruants, by making an exchange, when as they name one thing, and he giueth them an other as good, or better: as it is ſaide in the Pſal.21.4. Pſalme, He asked life of thee, & thou gaueſt him a long life, euen for euer and euer: where in the perſon of Dauid he ſheweth how God dealeth with his Church, they aske life of him, and he giueth not onely that, but eternall life: as he did to *Hezekiah*; but yet ſometimes they that are weake and ſicke, and deſire life, they haue it not graunted, but linger and pine away euen vnto death, and ſo God taketh them into his bleſſed kingdome, and giues them eternall life, which is better then that life that they deſired. And thus did he deale 1.Cor.15.32. with many of the Corinthians, whō he did by death iudge and chaſtiſe in this world, that they might be ſaued in the world to come.

And this was the caſe of his faith-

full

full ſeruant *Moſes*, who in the wilder- Deut.3.25.
neſſe deſired earneſtly of the Lord, that he might goe ouer and ſee that good land that was beyond Iorden, and that goodly mountain Sion, and Lebanon: but he would not heare him in that, and ſo cauſed him to goe vp into mount Nebo, vnto the top of chap.34.1. Piſgah where he ſhewed him all the land, and there he died, and ſo entred into the kingdome of heauen, and tooke poſſeſſion of it for euer, whereof this land was but a type & figure: and ſo the Lord denying him that particular, euē to come into the land of Canaan, gaue him that that was farre better, & whereby he was more confirmed in the fauō of God, and in the truth of his couenant; euen to enter into the kingdome of heauen, and ſo gaue him according to the meaning of his Spirit.

But further touching this matter, we are more generally to vnderſtand, that

that the Apoſtle ſaith not onely, that the croſſe ſhall turne to our good, but that this ſhall be verified of all the croſſes that euery way come vpon vs, be they neuer ſo ſtrange, or vnlooked for: whether it be ſicknes, pouertie, impriſonment, baniſhment, loſſe of husband, wife, children, father and mother, friends and kinred, loſſe of name and credit, or any thing els: as ſorrow and griefe of minde, and affliction of the ſpirit. Which is wiſely to be marked of vs, leaſt at any time we might be deceiued, to think when the Lord ſhall lay his hand vpon vs, as it pleaſeth him, that if it were ſome other affliction, then that which now is come vpon vs, we could haue ſome good hope in it; but this is ſo great, it toucheth vs ſo nearely, that we can not poſſibly ſee, how or which way it ſhould bring vs any good.

And as the Deuill is readie to aſſault vs with this temptation, ſo we by rea-

reaſon of our corruption are too prone to yeild vnto his perſwaſion therein, and ſo by impatiencie to be wearie of the croſſe, as not able to looke for any good from it. We therfore that wee might comfortably withſtand this temptation of his, beſides that we muſt holde our ſelues faſt to the words of the Apoſtle, who ſaith, that all things worke together for the beſt to thoſe that loue God; Gal. 1. 9. he ſpeaketh of all, not of this or that: againſt which if any, yea an Angel from heauen ſhould perſwade vs, we muſt hold him accurſed. We muſt cõſider that this good commeth frõ all affliction, not as though it were naturall & proper vnto it: for indeed it is otherwiſe, that of it ſelfe it maketh men worſe, as the ſunne hardeneth the clay: and it driueth men from good, as the rodde driueth the child away from the mother. And this is that which Satan aimeth at in all men,

Iob.1.11. men, as hee did in righteous *Iob*, though he preuailed not, when hee ſaid of him to the Lord, Stretch out thine hand, & touch all that he hath, and ſee if he will not blaſpheme thee to thy face. And thus he preuaileth with the wicked in all croſſes that come vpon them, as wee ſee in the example of *Pharaoh* king of Egypt, who by the ten plagues that God ſent vpon him, was made more hard hearted, and waxed ſtill worſe and worſe, and would not heare the commandement of God, to let the people of Iſrael goe.

But with the children of God it is not ſo, the goodneſſe of God towards them ouercommeth the malice of the deuill againſt them. And as in the wilderneſſe the ſting of the fierie ſerpẽts were healed in the bodies of mẽ

Num.21.9. by looking vp to the braſen ſerpent; ſo the venime and poiſon of all croſſes is taken away in the children of God,

God, by vertue of the croſſe of Chriſt; ſo that contrarie to the nature of it, it worketh good: as alſo by the death of Chriſt, the ſting of death is taken away, ſo that it cannot hurt any of his, but doth them the greateſt good, beeing thereby made for them a paſſage into eternal life. The which that it might not ſeeme ſtrange vnto vs, much leſſe impoſſible; namly, that affliction hurtfull in it ſelfe to the wicked, ſhould work for the beſt to thoſe that loue God: wee muſt remember that euen men by their wiſdome are able to make thoſe things ſerue for the benefit of man, which of themſelues are moſt hurtfull vnto him. 1. Cor. 15. 55.

For the Phyſition through his skill can cure a man by Gods ordinance and bleſſing, and ſo make him ſtronger then hee was before, by taking away ſome part of his blood, euen that wherein the life conſiſteth; and by taking away other humors, &

ſo

ſo diminiſhing a great part of his fleſh: and the Chyrurgion by cutting and pioreing the fleſh with an hotte yron, or eating it away with ſome corraſiues, is able by theſe woundes and hurtfull things, to preſerue the ſtate of the members of the bodie: Then the Lord much more by that which in it ſelfe would hurt our ſoules, is able to cure them, and to doe them good. And if the Apothecarie can ſo temper that which in it owne nature is poyſon (as the Vipers fleſh) ſo temper it I ſay, with other wholeſome ingredients, and correct it with thoſe that be cordiall, that of it hee will make a moſt ſoueraigne Treacle, and ſuch an wholeſome confection, as ſhall expell poyſon, and driue it from the heart; and ſo make that which of it ſelfe would cauſe death, to bee a ſpeciall preſeruer of life: Shall not the Lord by his infinite wiſedome, goodneſſe, and almightie power,

power, the Lord I ſay, which cauſed the light to ſhine out of darkeneſſe, contrarie to the nature of it, and who calleth the things that bee not, as though they were, and ſo cauſeth thē to be, and which bringeth good out of euill, euen his owne glorie out of the ſin of man; ſhall not he bee much more able by the moſt grieuous croſſes that can befall vs, to worke the greateſt good for vs that may be? 2. Cor. 4. 6.

Therefore when we would looke for good from our afflictions, and ſo be comforted in them, patiently bearing them, in hope of the bleſſed fruit that we ſhall reape by them; wee muſt not ſo much looke to the things themſelues, how fit they bee for vs, nor to our ſelues, how wee bee fitted for them; as to the truth of Gods promiſe made vnto vs concerning this matter, & ſo be ſure that the Lord wil worke our good thereby, becauſe he that is true and al-ſufficient hath ſaid it.

ſaid it. And this one perſwaſion no doubt, ſhould worke in vs great patience in all our afflictiõs; yea it ſhould make vs cheerefully, and with our heads lifted vp, & not hanging down, to beare them; for how many grieuous things will naturall men indure willingly, if they ſee that they will make for the bettering of their eſtate? As what will not the ſicke patiẽt ſuffer at the hands of the Phyſitiõ or Chirurgion by launcing, purging, ſearing, diet, &c. when he is perſwaded that they will procure his bodily health? ſhould not a Chriſtian man and woman much more indure hard things at the hands of God, ſeeing he hath ſaid that they ſhall procure the health of his ſoule, & worke his good that way.

But indeede herein lieth the point of this matter, and this is all in all, namely, that the poore afflicted ſoule knoweth not, that the Lord by his

his affliction will work his good: and that maketh him ſo vnquiet, and euer complaining: for giue him this faith, and the feeling of it, that his affliction ſhall be turned vnto his good, and lay vpon him whatſoeuer you will, he is content to beare it. Therefore for the ſatisfying of our ſelues herein, let vs hearken to that which the Apoſtle ſaith, Wee know, that all things worke together for the beſt to thoſe that loue God: which is as if he had ſaide, though you becauſe of your ignorance, vnbeleefe, and want of experience, are vncerten what wil be the happie iſſue of all your afflictions, yet we know very well, that all ſhall worke together for our & your good. Which he ſpeaketh confidently both as a teacher of the Church, an Apoſtle, and as a man of experience, and therefore we ought to giue credit vnto him, rather then to our ſelues. Euen as the patient doth to Rom. 8. 28.

the Phyſitian, though himſelfe had neuer experience of any ſuch thing before: when he ſaith vnto him, I knowe that this will make for the health of your bodie, and the preſeruation of your life.

And in this thing wee ought to giue credit vnto the Apoſtle ſo much the more, becauſe vnto his own word and ſaying, he ioyneth the teſtimony of many other, ſaying, Wee know, meaning the reſt of the Apoſtles and miniſters, and men of experience; he ſaith, that all of them knew it, & therfore this word beeing confirmed by the mouthes not of two or three witneſſes onely, but hauing (as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh) ſo great a cloud of witneſſes for it, it ſhould be receiued without all gainſaying. For it is all one, as if the ſicke patient fearing to take the potion that is preſcribed vnto him, leſt it ſhould make him more ſicke, he ſhould haue not onely one, but

H.b.12.1.

but an whole counſell of Phyſitians ſaying vnto him, that vndoubtedly this medicine is like to do you good: we know the working of it very wel, and haue had great experience of it in many, you neede not to feare it, take it vpon our credit. This would much mooue and incourage him vnto it.

So no doubt this ſhould correct the too much feare that is in vs, of beeing hurt by the croſſe, when we heare ſo many excellent and famous men, very skilfull therein, to ſpeake ſo boldly vnto vs of the benefit of it: euen thoſe, whome ſeeing that we are moſt readie to beleeue in all other things, why ſhould we not giue credit vnto them in this alſo? But that we might doe it the rather, let vs a little conſider in particular of the benefit of the croſſe. And though the Apoſtle name one great one here, which might be ſufficient; yet before

we come to it, let vs ſee, what other endes of it the Scripture affoardeth vnto vs.

And firſt of all, we ſhall finde it to be a ſpeciall meanes to draw vs from the too much loue of this world; that according to the ſaying of the
1.Cor.7.31. Apoſtle, they that vſe this world might be as though they vſed it not, that is, that we might be ſo addicted to theſe worldly things, that we ſet not our affections too much vpon them. For ſuch is the corruption of our nature, that when wee haue all things at will, we are ſo wedded to this world, that we thinke it beſt for vs alwaies to abide here, and here we would ſet vp our tabernacles for euer; and wee are readie to ſay with the
Luk.12.19. worldling in the Goſpel, Soule, thou haſt much goods laid vp for many yeares, liue at eaſe, eate and drinke, & take thy pleaſure: and though heauen be a thouſand times heauenly,

yet

yet we desire it not at all, or not so earnestly as we should; but wee are still earthly minded, and as it were groueling vpon the earth: so hardly or not at all can wee come vnto that that we are exhorted vnto, to seeke, and to set our affections on those things that are aboue, and not on things which are in the earth; yet when by affliction we shal finde that there is no contentation in any estate here below, it may mooue vs to despise all worldly things, and to aspire vnto heauen, where in the presence of God is the fulnesse of ioy, & at his right hand are pleasures for euermore.

Col of. 3. 2.

Psal. 16. 11.

For this cause the holy Patriarkes suffered so many afflictions in the daies of their pilgrimages, as appeareth in their seueral stories; in respect of which one of them said, That his daies were fewe and euill. For whereas many earthly things were promi-

Gen. 47. 9.

ſed vnto them, yet that they might not ſtaie in them, but from them, as it were by certaine ſtairs, they might aſcend vnto the conſideration of heauenly things, which the earthly did ſhadow out vnto them, and which they were eſpecially to looke for; he mingled his manifold great bleſſings with manifold croſſes: & in that land that was promiſed vnto them, they had no certaine abiding, that they might ſeeke after the kingdome of heauen: As the Apoſtle ſaith vnto
Heb. 11. 9. the Hebrewes, By faith *Abraham* abode in the land of promiſe, as in a ſtrange countrey, as one that dwelt in tents, with *Izaack* and *Iacob* heires with him of the ſame promiſe; for he looked for a citie hauing a foundation whoſe builder and maker is God. Theſe men had none inheritance in the land of Canaan, that they might not dream of a perpetuitie there, but might thinke of heauen, as of a better countrey,

countrey, where they ſhould remain for euer, confeſſing themſelues continually to bee but ſtrangers and pilgrimes on the earth.

Thus alſo the Lord dealeth with many before their death, laying long and grieuous diſeaſes vpon them, as he did vpon his ſeruant *Iob*, that they finding no reſt in this world, might be willing to goe out of it when hee ſhall ſend for them, and ſay with olde father *Simeon*, Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſeruant depart in peace: yea that they might deſire death moſt willingly, which before as moſt ougly and loathſome they did abhorre: and ſo ſaie with S. *Paul*, I deſire to bee looſed, and to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all. So that as the mother by ſome vnpleaſant thing weaneth the ſucking childe from the breaſt, now when ſtronger meate is more fit for it, vpon which otherwiſe it would alwaies linger to the hurt of

Luk. 2. 29.

Phil. 1. 23.

it; ſo the Lord by the croſſe weaneth our affections from the profits and pleaſures of the world, and ſo turneth it vnto our good: and therefore if by experience we find that by any affliction we growe more wearie of the world, or leſſe in loue with it, we are not onely to take it patiently, but therein ſee the truth of this promiſe:

Rom. 8. 28. we know that all things worke together for the beſt to thoſe that loue God.

Moreouer by affliction the Lord bringeth vs to a more thorough repentance and ſorrow for our ſinnes, and worketh that in vs therby, which the word did not before; when wee finde by woefull experience what great miſeries our ſins haue brought vs vnto, and how iuſt and true God

1. Cor. 11 31 is in all his threatnings. For if when we haue ſinned, we would iudge our ſelues before hand, God would not iudge vs: but when wee are iudged,

wee

wee are chaſtened of the Lord, that we might not bee condemned with the world: whereunto agreeth the ſaying of the Pſalmiſt, which is foũd to bee true by daily experience; that whether the Lord laie vpon men ſickeneſſe, or impriſonment, or pouertie and want, or baniſhment, or ſuch like; when he hũbleth the heart Pſal. 107. 12. with heauineſſe they crie vnto the Lord in their trouble: ſo that affliction bringeth men to humilitie for their ſinnes, and to pray vnto God to be pardoned, and to be deliuered. As we ſee in the example of the prodigall childe, who by great miſerie came to repent him of his riotous life; for when he had ſpent all, there aroſe a great famine in that land, and he began to bee in neceſſitie, which afterwards was ſo great, that hee would faine haue filled his bellie with the huskes that the ſwine ate, but no man gaue them him: then he Luk. 15.

ſaid,

ſaid, I will riſe and goe to my father, and ſay vnto him, Father, I haue ſinned againſt heauen, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy ſonne, make me as one of thy hired ſeruants. Thus wee ſee by affliction vnto what meaſure of humiliatiõ and repentance for his ſinnes, & confeſſion of them he was brought vnto: a moſt excellent fruit of the croſſe.

The like may bee ſaid of the brethren of *Ioſeph*, who after that they had ſold him into Egypt, and made their father beleeue that hee was torne in pieces of ſome wilde beaſt; though we may preſume of thẽ, that they beeing brought vp, and ſtill liuing in the houſe of their godly father *Iacob*, they did ſecretly repent thẽ of their ill dealing towards their brother *Ioſeph*: yet many yeares after, euen twentie or thereabout, whẽ they were in aduerſitie, the memorie of it renued it ſelfe afreſh, and thereby they

they were brought more ſeriouſly to iudge themſelues for it; for they ſaid one to another, We haue verily ſinned againſt our brother, in that wee ſawe the anguiſh of his ſoule when he beſought vs, and wee would not heare him, therefore is this trouble come vpon vs. Thus this croſſe was turned to their good, in that it brought them to a further ſight and feeling of their ſinne, and to a more voluntarie and free confeſſion of the ſame. Gen.42.21

So that affliction in this reſpect is compared to fire that purgeth the gold, and conſumeth the droſſe of it; and vnto a file that ſcowreth off the ruſt of yron, and maketh it bright; & vnto a purgation, that expelleth the corrupt and ſuperfluous humors out of the bodie: Therefore euen as the fire doth not hurt the gold in conſuming the droſſe, neither the file hurteth the yron in taking away the ruſt, nei-

neither doth the purgation hurt the bodie in expelling of ill humors: So afflictions cauſing vs to abhorre and leaue ſome ſinne or other, which if we continued in, would deſtroy vs, may truely be ſaid not to hurt vs, but to worke our good, of what nature or kinde ſoeuer they bee: according to the ſaying of the Apoſtle, All things worke together for the good of thoſe that loue God.

In the third place, this is the benefit of affliction, that it preſerueth vs from many ſinnes, which otherwiſe through our owne corruption, and the temptations of the world and Satan we might fall into; but that being vnder the hād of God, as it were vnder the rodde, we are thereby kept in more awe: So that as Phyſicke ſerueth not only to cure vs of the diſeaſes which we are alreadie fallen into, but alſo and eſpecially to preuent them, and to keepe vs in ſome tole-

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rable eſtate of health: So the croſſe recouereth vs out of ſinne, when we are fallen into it, and preſerueth vs from many, which otherwiſe might creepe vpon vs. And therefore as ſome ſickly bodies are driuen to diet themſelues, and are in a continuall courſe of phyſicke, to preuent that which their corrupt eſtate would otherwiſe neceſſarily pull vpon them: So others by reaſon of the corruptions of their ſoules, and the manifold offences that they liue amongſt, are alwaies, or the greateſt part of their liues in the diet of affliction, as it were the phyſicke of their ſoules: not ſo much to bring them from groſſe and grieuous ſinnes, which they are as yet free from; as to keepe them frō falling into them, which the Lord foreſeeth they are moſt readie to do, in reſpect of their ages, callings, and places, that they liue in.

If then the Lord at any time deale with

with vs, as men do with vnruly colts, or vntamed heyfers, which are kept from ſtraying out of their paſtures with hedges and ditches, ſo that they can not break out without their own hurt: ſo the Lord puts thornes and bryars as it were in our waies, that is, laieth affliction vpon vs, and ſo ſtoppeth the way againſt vs, that wee might not breake forth by any kinde of diſobedience either on the right hand, or on the left, to our own hurt: muſt we not needs ſay, that euen this way, as well as any other, the Lord worketh by affliction our ſingular good? And this is that, which God promiſed to his owne people among the idolatrous Iſraelites, namely, that by his afflictions he would ſo keepe them in, and bring them to ſuch ſtraitnes, that they ſhold haue no luſt to play the wantons, and to fall away from him by idolatrie after the example of others: when he ſaith, I will

ſtoppe

ſtoppe thy way with thornes, and make an hedge, that ſhee ſhall not finde her paths. So that their affliction ſhould be an hedge of ſharpe thornes to pricke them, leaſt they ſhould breake out, and ſtray frō Gods commandements. Hoſ.2.6.

And this as it is a ſingular ende of affliction, ſo Dauid pronounceth thē bleſſed that are partakers of it to that ende, and can make that good vſe of it to themſelues, ſaying, Bleſſed is the man, whome thou chaſtiſeſt, O Lord, and teacheſt in thy law: that thou maieſt giue him reſt from the daies of euill, whiles the pit is digged for the wicked. So that it is a bleſſed thing to be ſo corrected, that he is taught the right vſe of it, euen to walke more carefully in the obedience of Gods law, that ſo he may eſcape thoſe puniſhments which ſhall come vpon the wicked for their ſinns to their deſtruction. And this vſe *Da-* Pſal.94.12.

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Dauid made of his affliction, as he pro-
Psal. 116. 67. fesseth of himselfe, before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I keepe thy words: so that by his affliction he was kept from going astray, as he had wont to doe, and was constrained in a reuerent feare to walke in the compasse of Gods holy law: whereupon he concludeth thus by his owne ex-
71. perience: It is good for me that I haue beene afflicted, that I may feare thy statutes. Thus affliction was a sensible kind of teaching to cause him to liue after Gods statutes, and not after the common course of the world.

Fourthly, afflictions in the Scriptures are called trialls, because that by them the Lord trieth vs, and prooueth what is in vs: not that he is ignorant of it; for *Dauid* saith vnto
Psal. 139. 2. God, Thou knowest my sitting & rising, thou vnderstādest my thoughts a farre off, thou compassest my paths,

and

and my lying downe, and art accuſtomed to all my waies: for there is not a word in my tongue, but loe thou knoweſt it, O Lord. So that he hath full & perfect knowledge of vs without any triall: yet he trieth vs by affliction, becauſe thereby he would haue our ſelues and others throughly to know, what is in vs, and in what meaſure: and that both in reſpect of the good and euill that is in vs; which without the triall could not ſo well be knowne. Which kind of triall ſerueth to this ende, that if we haue receiued any good grace, we might be thankefull to God for it, and for the meaſure of it: if not, we might labor for it; and if we haue any ſinne in vs, we might repent and ſtriue againſt it: if not, we might take heede, that wee fall not into it for the time to come; and ſo euery way God might be glorified.

And thus ſpeaketh the Apoſtle S.

Peter of the afflictions of the church, comparing them vnto fire, whereby mettalls are tried, whē he saith, Now
1.Pet.1.6. for a season (if neede require) ye are in heauines, through manifold tentations; that the triall of your faith, being much more pretious then gold that perisheth (thogh it be tried with fire) might be found vnto your praise, and honour, and glorie at the appearing of Iesus Christ. Where the Apostle saith, that if men by the fire will trie their gold, to that ende, that they might certenly know, what is the value of it, and yet it is but a thing that perisheth, and therefore in no wise to be compared to faith and other most excellent graces of the spirit of God: Then the Lord much more may make triall of them by affliction, to the ende that all men may see them to be so pretious, and so pure as they be; and that they may be discerned from the hypocriticall and coun-

counterfeit shewes of vertue that are in the wicked and vngodly: that so men might make sure reckoning of the one, and not trust to the other, & so be deceiued by them.

Thus it is truly said, that God did proue *Abraham*, when he saide vnto him, Take thine onely sonne *Isaac*, whome thou loueſt, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering vpon one of the mountaines, which I wil shew thee: and he did so: and therefore the Apostle saith, that by faith he offered vp Isaac, when he was tried: so that this was a great triall vnto him, to sacrifice his owne sonne, whome he so loued, and in whome he had receiued the promise. But when he stretched forth his hand, and tooke the knife to kill his sonne, the Lord said vnto him from heauen, Lay not thine hand vpon the child, neither doe any thing vnto him: for now I know, that

Gen.22.2

Heb.11.17.

Gen.22.10.

thou feareſt God, ſeeing for my ſake, thou haſt not ſpared thine onely ſon. The Lord knew the obedience of Abraham before, but he ſpeaketh according to mens vnderſtanding, that now he by good proofe and triall knew it, and made it knowne to Abraham himſelfe, and to all poſteritie.

And thus our Sauiour Chriſt in the Goſpel by a parable ſheweth, how it is knowne, who haue receiued the ſeede of Gods word into good hearts, and who into bad: namely, they that continue in the obedience of it in the time of temptation and triall, and they that fall away, ſaying, Luk.8.13. They that are on the ſtones, are they, which when they haue heard, receiue the word with ioy; but they haue no rootes: which for a while beleeue, but in the time of temptation goe away. Thus though they ſeemed to beleeue for a time, yet when they fall away

away in temptatiõ, by this triall it appeareth, that the word of God was neuer throughly rooted in thẽ. And by an other compariſon alſo he ſheweth, how vpon triall it is manifeſt, who are profitable hearers of the word of God, and who are not: for he that heareth the word of God, & doth it, is like a wiſe man, which hath builded his houſe on a rocke; and the raine fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beate vpon that houſe, and it fell not: for it was groũded on a rocke. But he that heareth the word, and doth it not, is like a fooliſh man, which hath builded his houſe on the ſand, and the raine fell, and the floods came, and the winde blew, and beat vpon that houſe, and it fell, and the fall of it was great. Temptations therefore and trialls, which are here compared vnto ſtormes and tempeſts, will ſhew what is in all ſorts of men, and whether Math. 7. 24.

they haue beene profitable, or vnprofitable hearers of the word of God; and this is a ſpeciall ende of them, thus to lay open men, both to themſelues, and to the world: when as it ſhall appeare, that in affliction & vnder the croſſe they are the ſame that they were before, or they are not, but farre vnlike.

After this manner were the Iſraelites tried and prooued in the wilderneſſe by the ſpace of fourtie yeares, in which time ſome of them prooued themſelues murmurers, ſome fornicators, ſome idolatours, ſome diſobedient, ſome faithfull: and all this was by the ſeuerall afflictions and croſſes that did befall them. And thus alſo by the great afflictions that did befall *Iob* in one day, as the loſſe of all his goods and children, it appeared what great vprightnes and ſinceritie, and faithfull obedience was in him: when as he ſaide, Naked came I out of my mo-

mothers wombe, and naked ſhall I returne thither: the Lord hath giuen, and the Lord hath taken it: bleſſed be the name of the Lord. And in all this great loſſe he did not ſin, nor charge God fooliſhly. Iob 1.21.

For though Satan tooke him to be like other men, and that he ſerued God more for his commodities ſake, becauſe he bleſſed him, then of conſcience, and therefore ſaid, Doth *Iob* feare God for nought? haſt thou not made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on euery ſide? thou haſt bleſſed the worke of his hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed. But ſtretch out now thin hand, and touch all that he hath, to ſee if he will not blaſpheme thee to thy face: and then the Lord ſaid vnto Satan, Loe, all that he hath is in thine hand: and thereupon Satan deſtroied in one day all that he had; and yet he continued in his vprightnes, and was and 1.9.

the ſame man that he was before: by this great triall it appeared, that that was true, that the Lord had ſaide of him before: that hee was an vpright and iuſt man indeede; and one
verſ.10. that feared God, and eſchewed euill: for all theſe great afflictions could not make him to fall from his former courſe.

And thus laſtly by triall appeared the great weakenes of the Apoſtle S. *Peter*, and the reſt of the Diſciples, who though as a moſt reſolute man
Mat.26.13. he had ſaid, Though al men be offended by thee, yet will I neuer bee offended; and then Ieſus ſaid vnto him, Verily this night before the cocke crowe, thou ſhalt denie me thrice: & *Peter* ſaid to him againe, Though I ſhould die with thee, I wil in no caſe denie thee, and ſo ſaid alſo all the di-
47. ſciples: yet when they ſaw a great multitude with ſwordes and ſtaues from the high Prieſt and Elders of the

the people, and *Iudas* with a kiſſe betraied him into their hands, and ſo they tooke him & led him away; then all the Diſciples fledde. And whereas there ſeemed to be a little more courage in *Peter* then in the reſt, for hee followed Chriſt though a farre off, & ſo came into the high Prieſts hall, and ſate downe with the ſeruants to ſee the ende; yet when he ſaw greater danger like to enſue, & he was charged to be one of Chriſts Diſciples, at the voice of a maide he grew to be ſo timerous and fearefull, that hee ſware and forſware with curſing and banning, denying Chriſt, euen that euer he ſo much as once knewe the man. Neither himſelfe, nor any other would haue thought that ſo much weakenes ſhould haue broake out from him, before he came to this triall; but thereby it was laid open. 58. 74.

Therefore, if it bee good for vs not to be ignorant of our ſelues, as indeede

indeede hath beene thought to bee a point of greateſt wiſdome, for a man throughly to know himſelfe, that ſo he might not be deceiued with an ouerweening of himſelfe; if it be good I ſay, for any man to ſee his wants & weakneſſes, that he may be humbled by them, and ſeek to haue them ſupplied; if it be good to know certainely that we haue receiued ſuch & ſuch graces of the ſpirit of God, & in that meaſure that wee haue, that ſo wee may be thankfull to God for them, & comforted in our ſelues ouer them: Then ſeeing that affliction and the croſſe bringeth forth all this fruit at once, and by triall wee finde what faith, hope, loue, patience, obedięce, &c. is in vs, and what not; inſomuch, that whatſoeuer we ſeemed to be before to our ſelues, and to others, yet now we know certainly that wee are thus and thus, and no otherwiſe: it cā not be denied but that affliction worketh

keth much good vnto vs, and wee ought vpon experiẽce to ſay, that we know it to be ſo, euen as the Apoſtle doth here; We knowe that all things worke together for the beſt to thoſe that loue God.

Which alſo wee may ſo much the more cõfidently ſay, when we ſhal ſee (omitting to ſpeake of many moe vſes that the croſſe hath) that laſt and greateſt of all, which is ſpoken of in the verſe following, in theſe words; For thoſe whom he knew before, he alſo predeſtinate to bee made like to the image of his ſonne, that he might be the firſt borne of many brethren: where he ſheweth this one ende of the croſſe, namely, that thereby wee might bee made like vnto Chriſt in his ſufferings. But before we come to that, we muſt remember that hitherto we haue ſeene, that there is great vſe of affliction, and that it worketh much good: and therefore wee muſt con- Rom. 8. 28.

consider that in euery crosse, besides the present bearing of it, the Lord offereth great cõmoditie vnto vs, and worketh it in vs thereby, according to the words of the Text, All things worke together for the best to those that loue God.

So that as in all other things there is not onely the present possession, & enioying of them, but there is the vse and comfort of them; insomuch that men may haue great store of goods and possessions, and yet haue no vse of them, as *Salomon* by his great wisdome obserued, and set it downe in the booke of the Preacher, saying, Eccles.4.8. There is one alone, and there is not a second, which hath neither sonne nor daughter, yet is there none ende of his trauaile, neither can his eie bee satisfied with riches, neither doth he thinke, for whom doe I trauaile, and defraud my soule of pleasure: Euen so many haue great and long crosses vpon

vpon them, but make no good vſe of them, neither doe labour after the fruit of them: but God worketh by them their good, in thoſe that bee his.

Seeing then afflictions are common both to the good and the bad, and God layeth them vpon them both alike, and they muſt beare them whether they will or no; the one muſt labour for the good which the Lord offereth to them therby, which the other not once ſo much as looke after: of which dutie of theirs, when Gods children are ſomewhat more careleſſe of then they ſhould, then no doubt the Lord in wiſdome and in mercie continueth his rod vpon thē longer; yea, and often increaſeth thē, becauſe his purpoſe is to doe them good thereby: and ſo herein dealeth with them as a moſt louing and tender father (as indeede he is) who ſpareth not the rod, vntill his childe bee thereby

thereby humbled, and brought to the confession and amendment of his fault: because his purpose is, by his fatherly correction to doe him good.

Wherein parents often put a difference betweene their children and their seruants; for often they let their seruants alone, and leaue them as incorrigible, when they will not profit by words, or a few stripes, as not caring for them, because they purpose not alwaies to be troubled with thē: but their children, because they see that they cannot cast off naturall affection from them, therfore they leaue them not after once or twice correction, but still follow them with the rodde, till they amend: So the Lord, when he spareth the wicked in their sinnes, and reserueth them for a further and more heauie iudgement at the last, correcting his owne children in the meane season againe and againe; he sheweth that his purpose is thereby

thereby to doe them, aboue all other, much good.

Therefore let no man in the continuance of his afflictions, though long and grieuous, be too much discouraged, as though the Lord were continually angrie with him, or had a purpose to destroy and make an ende of him thereby; for he could do that in a moment at once: but let him rather thus thinke with himselfe, and reason out of the word of God; Now I know assuredly, that the Lord loueth me indeede, because hee purposeth to doe me good by all things, euen by affliction, according to his promise: and therefore whereas I through the vntowardnes of my nature, haue not profited sufficiently by his former chastisements, according to his good meaning towards me, he hath sent me a new fatherly correction, thereby at the last to worke my further good: and whereas I thorough

rough the crookedneſſe and vntowardneſſe of my ſinnefull diſpoſition doe not yet profit by them, as hee would haue me; therefore I ſee, that in much mercie and louing kindneſſe he continueth it, that ſo I might get good by it at the laſt.

Wherein the Lord dealeth with vs like a wiſe and conſcionable Phyſitian; who purpoſing not ſo much to giue phyſicke vnto the ſicke patient, and to practiſe on him for his owne gaine, as to cure him by thoſe medicines that he applieth to him, and ſo ſeeketh his health and recouerie: if the firſt medicine will remooue the diſeaſe, thē there he leaueth him, and goes no further; if not, he miniſtreth an other medicine after that, and it may be the third & the fourth, becauſe he hath a care of him, and ſeekes his health. And if at any time he maketh any intermiſſion in the courſe of his phyſicke, and ceaſeth to pra-

practise any further on him; it is not because he meaneth to leaue him, & to giue him ouer; but because of the patients weakenes, that he might gather some further strength, and giue a breathing time to that end.

Euen so the Lord proceedeth according to his gratious pleasure, to doe vs good by affliction, and hauing sanctified it by the crosse of Christ to that end; when by the first crosse we profit not, as we ought, the either he letteth the same lie longer vpon vs, that it might do vs good at the last; or els taking it away, laieth an other in stead of it for the same ende. Which though he doe not presently, because we were not then able to indure, yet sometime afterwards, when it seemeth best to his heauenly wisdome. Therfore the best thing for euery man is, soone to profit vnder the crosse, that God hath laid vpon him, that so it might speedily

dily be remooued: and not to labour ſo much for the remooving of it, as for the fruit of it; leaſt it going away without profit, and not working that in vs, for which God did ſend it, the Lord bring vpon vs ſome greater afterwards, ſeeing it is his purpoſe thereby moſt aſſuredly to doe vs good.

Moreouer, by this we know, that whereas euery man naturally deſireth that which is beſt for him, and yet moſt men erre in the particulars, they deſiring that which is moſt pleaſant, profitable, and honourable, &c. in this world: which deſires of theirs the Prophet expreſſeth in theſe words; Many ſay, who will ſhew vs any good: By this, I ſay, we know, that that thing indeede is beſt for vs at all times, whatſoeuer it be, which maketh moſt for the glorie of God, for our owne ſaluation, and for the edifying of our brethren: which becauſe

Pſal 4.6.

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the Lord worketh many times by afflictions, as we haue heard, and often more by them, then by his benefits, we muſt be perſwaded, that euē they are then beſt for euery man which though it be contrarie to mans reaſon, yet it is agreeable to the word of God, & which we ought to beleeue.

Euen as when a mans bodie is greatly diſtempered with abundance of blood, or ouerladen with ſuperfluous and groſſe humors, or hath ſome member greatly putrified: then and in theſe reſpects it is beſt for him to haue his blood taken away, and his humors, that his fleſh may be abated, and fall away; yea it is beſt for him in theſe caſes to be launced and cut, to be ſeared, and to haue a part cut off, that the reſt might be ſaued. Which though they be grieuous in themſelues, yet at this time they are moſt profitable, and to be deſired. Therefore when any affliction or calamitie

doth befall vs, let vs not be discontented therewith; as with that that is hurtfull for vs, neither be too impatient and wearie; as of a thing that we would faine be ridde of; but submitting our iudgements and wills to the iudgement and will of God reuealed in his word, let vs quietly indure, seeing that euen now the Lord giueth vs that, not which we fondly desire, as the best; but which he knoweth to be, and is indeede at this time the best.

Seeing then it is so, (for the further clearing of this truth) what I pray you is the cause, why not onely the wicked and vngodly, who are not able to iudge of this matter, by all the wit and reason that they haue; but euen the very godly, who beeing enlightened by the spirit of God, ought to know this doctrine to be true, and to beleeue it, that they, I say, doe so grieuously complaine of their afflictions,

ctions, as thoſe which are the worſt for them that can be? and as thoſe that ſhould not onely doe them no good, but much hurt: when as wee haue ſeene alreadie how many waies they worke their good, and therefore are the beſt for them indeede.

Why did *Iob*, ſeeing his afflictions were ſent vnto him by God for his triall, and for his good, why did he ſo complaine of them? Oh that my griefe were well waied, and my miſeries were laid together in the ballance? for it would now be heauier then the ſand of the ſea: therefore my words are ſwallowed vp. For the arrowes of the Almightie are in me, the venime thereof doth drinke vp my ſpirit, and the terrours of God fight againſt me, &c. Why doth *Dauid* alſo make ſo grieuous complaints in reſpect of the affliction that did befall him, when he beginneth the Pſalme thus lamentably; O Lord, re- Pſal. 38. 1.

Iob 6. 2.

buke me not in thine anger, neither chaſtiſe me in thy wrath: for thine arrows haue light vpon me, and thine hand lieth vpon me: there is nothing ſound in my fleſh, becauſe of thine anger, neither is there reſt in my bones, becauſe of my ſin. My wounds are putrified and corrupt; I am bowed and crooked very ſore; I go mourning all the day: for my reines are full of burning, and there is nothing ſound in my fleſh: my heart panteth, and my ſtrength faileth, and the light of mine eyes, euen they are not mine owne, &c.

If theſe afflictions of theirs did worke their good, why did they thus complaine of them? Truely it cannot be denied, but that men for the moſt part doe more complaine of their afflictions, then they ought to doe, and are more full of murmuring and impatiencie vnder the hand of God, then they ſhould be: and they doe

doe not ſo comfortably beare their croſſes as they ſhould and might: yet all this hindereth not, but that the Lord by them ſeeketh their good, & they ſhould labour to profit, & to be bettered by their afflictions, and bee perſwaded that they ſhall worke together for the beſt vnto them, thogh they be full of cõplaints, whiles they are in the middeſt of them. For who euer complained more of their afflictions, then theſe two men, *Iob* and *Dauid*, and yet who had more profit, or gote more good by thẽ then they? both of thẽ being thus tried, & in the triall found to bee moſt faithfull and patient, and conſtant vnto the ende.

And concerning this proneneſſe in vs to complaine, we muſt conſider that ſuch is our nature, that we muſt needes haue the feeling of our afflictions, vnleſſe our hearts were hardened, like yron or ſteele, and ſo wee were ſenſleſſe like ſtocks and ſtones,

and not as men. And therefore ſeeing it is otherwiſe, namly, our hearts naturally are ſoft and tender, and readie to be broken with affliction, and ſome more, and ſome leſſe; it cannot poſſibly be, but that euery thing that befalleth vs, ſhould worke vpon vs, and that we ſhould bee mooued according to the nature and qualitie of it; either to ioy or ſorrow, loue or hatred, anger or feare, and ſuch like: & therefore tribulation muſt needes trouble vs, and affliction muſt needs afflict vs, and the croſſe cannot but crucifie vs; & yet we may and ought for all that bee perſwaded, that it is for our good, and looke for it from thence, and pray to God in faith that we may finde it.

Euen as the ſicke patient, & painfull languiſhing creature vnder the Phyſitians hand, cannot as he is a naturall man, indued with ſenſe and reaſon, but feele to his great griefe the laun-

launcing with ſharpe kniues, and the ſearing of his fleſh with redde hotte yrons, & ſo complaine of them with much heauineſſe, and many teares; yea crie out and roare for the extremitie of his paine, though he knoweth it be beſt for him then thus to be handled: and therefore though he be ſometimes bound in the dreſſing both hand and foote, or violently held by men; yet after a ſort hee doth moſt willingly ſuffer it. And this is one cauſe of complaining in affliction, though they are perſwaded that it is for their good, euen the infirmitie and tendernes of our nature, whereby all croſſes worke on vs as they doe.

But there is an other cauſe more principall then this, which proceedeth from ignorãce, or want of faith: for many are too full of complaints in their affliction, becauſe they are not perſwaded at all, or not at that time,

time, when they are in temptation, that aduerſitie, or the croſſe is for their good; or at leaſt not that particular croſſe, and in that manner, that it is vpon them: which if they could come vnto, whatſoeuer ſhould be laid vpō them, they would not greatly complaine of it, for the hope of future good would mitigate and aſſwage all. Therefore all ſuch are to meditate vpon that which hath alreadie beene ſpoken concerning this matter; namely, how many waies by affliction the Lord doth vs good.

In the latter part of the verſe, whē he ſaith, To them that loue God; that is, all things worke together for the beſt vnto them that loue God: as he thereby reſtraineth this general promiſe, becauſe it is not made to all; ſo he ſheweth to whome it appertaineth; namely, to thoſe that beleeue in Chriſt, and are ſanctified by his Spirit, whereof this is one ſpeciall fruit;

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The loue of God. For he intreateth here of the certentie of the ſaluation of thoſe that belong vnto Chriſt, as appeareth by the firſt words of the chapter; Now then there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Ieſus, which walke not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit. Where he alſo diſcerneth the true beleeuer from others, by this fruit of faith, namely, ſanctification; & here he doth name one principall of it, which is loue: Loue to God, from whence ariſeth loue vnto men for his ſake, and from them both, all duties to God and man. Rom. 8. 1.

And thus the Apoſtle alſo in an other place ioyneth faith and loue together, as thoſe that are inſeparable, when he ſaith, that in Ieſus Chriſt neither circumciſion nor vncircumciſion auaileth any thing: but faith, which worketh by loue: where his meaning is, that no outward thing, or Gal. 5. 6.

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ſeruice of God, though commanded by him, as circumciſion was, commendeth vs to God, or maketh vs acceptable vnto God, but onely Chriſt, and his obedience: which we take hold of, and ſo make ours by faith: which faith is then effectual and liuely, when it breedeth in vs a loue, which loue appeareth by the fruits and effects of the ſame. So then the Apoſtle here vnder one fruit, which is loue, comprehendeth all godlines, and ſanctification.

But hee taketh this thing rather then any other, (The loue of God) as that, that is moſt fit for his purpoſe: for ſpeaking of affliction he ſaith, that by this we ſhall trie our faith, if our loue to God continue euen then: ſo that wee ceaſe not to loue God, though he afflict vs. For whereas the very wicked will pretend to loue God in proſperitie, and as long as all things goe well with them, they will pro-

profeſſe that they loue God, as much as any, yea, and that they were worſe then the bruit beaſts, if that they did not loue him; and that with all their heart, who beſtoweth all things vpon them ſo liberally, and many ſuch glorious words they will vtter: but in aduerſitie, and when God layeth affliction vpon them, their loue is changed: yea, they fall into open hatred and defiance with God, yea euen vnto plaine curſing and banning; as appeareth by the example of *Iobs* wife, who ſaide vnto her husband; Doeſt thou continue ſtill in thine vprightneſſe, blaſpheme God, and die. But he that loueth God truly, loueth him not for his backe and belly, as we ſay, but becauſe he is goodnes it ſelfe, and therefore principally to be beloued for himſelfe: and ſo their loue continueth, though all outward bleſſings be taken away. Iob 2.

And herein the wicked too manifeſtly

feſtly bewray vile mindes, and ſeruile natures; that like as ſeruants loue not their maſters, nor maidens their miſtreſſes, if they once beginne to correct them for their faults; & ſo grow wearie of them, and are readie to run away from them: as the maid ſeruant
Gen. 16. 6. *Hagar* the Egyptian did from her miſtreſſe *Sarai*. But the godly doe this way as apparantly ſhew their liberall nature, and ingenuous diſpoſition; in that as no correction or ſtripes of the father or mother, can make the child to change his loue to them, & wholly to alienate his minde from them, much leſſe can they driue him cleane away from them, but he will abide in their houſe, and in all his neede reſort to them for ſuccour: ſo will they ſtill in affliction loue God, and depend vpon him for all things needfull.

And this corruption to be in the nature of all men generally, euen by affliction to fall away from the loue

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and ſeruice of God, Satan knew well enough, and therefore thought to haue found it in *Iob*, though he did not, when he ſaide vnto the Lord, Doth *Iob* loue, or feare, or ſerue God for nought? as if he had ſaid, he doth not ſerue thee for thine owne ſake, or for any loue that hee beareth vnto thee, but for the commoditie that he receiueth by thee: for he addeth, Haſt not thou made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on euery ſide: thou haſt bleſſed the worke of his hands, & his ſubſtance is increaſed in the land: but ſtretch out thine hand, and touch all that he hath, to ſee if he will not blaſpheme thee to thy face. In which words he noteth that vice, that men commonly are ſubiect vnto, that is, to hide their rebellion in proſperitie, and in aduerſitie to bewray it. Iob 1.9.

Therefore if we be free from this vice, and increaſe not in affliction to

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loue God, and in loue to serue him, we shall be sure, that he will fulfil this promise of his vnto vs, of turning all things to our good: and causing all our crosses to make together for the best vnto vs, so long as we loue God: and this vnfained loue that we finde we beare in our hearts vnto God, is a sure testimonie vnto vs of it, and we ought thereby to be perswaded of the vndoubted truth of it, & so comfort our selues for the time present, that God will doe vs good by this correction of his, euen because wee loue him.

Moreouer, seeing that the Apostles purpose here is, to intreat of patience in affliction, and to prepare vs for it; this no doubt is most fit for the same, namely, the consideration of that loue, which we ought to beare vnto God, whereby we might be moued to take all things in good part, that he sends vnto vs, because

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we loue him, and in loue are desirous to please him. For we see daily in all worldly matters, what great things all sorts of men will beare at the hāds of them, whome they loue: as how many grieuous things doth the mother put vp at the hands of her froward child, whome thee tenderly loueth? And the husband passeth ouer with silence many things that are offensiue proceeding from his wife, because shee is deare vnto him, and his loue towards her causeth him not to regard them; yea for her sake he beareth with many things at the hands of others.

As it is said of *Iacob*, that he serued *Laban* a very hard master seuen years for *Rahel*, during which time he tooke great paines day and night: for in the day he was consumed with heat, and with frost in the night, and his wages was changed ten times: yet they seemed vnto him but a fewe daies, be- Gen. 29. 20. & 31. 40.

cauſe he loued her: thus loue vnto men cauſeth vs to indure hard things for their ſakes whome we loue: and the more we loue them, the more willingly to gratifie them doe wee chearefully vndergoe any hard ſeruice for them. How much more then ought we patiently to beare all things at the hand of God, whom we know, that he ſo loued vs, that he ſpared not
Rom.8.32. his owne ſonne, but gaue him for vs all to death: and therefore we ought to loue him aboue all other things, yea aboue our ſelues againe.

And no doubt wee would thus beare all croſſes laid vpon vs by God for our good, a great deale more patiently then we doe, if there were in vs that loue vnto his maieſtie, that
1.Cor.13.5. there ought. For loue ſeeketh not her owne things: that is, it is the propertie of loue, not ſo much to ſeeke to ſatisfie their owne minde, as to gratifie the partie whome they loue, euē

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in things often contrary to their own liking: therefore let vs labour for that pure & ſincere loue vnto God, which may abide in the greateſt affliction, ſo ſhall we not onely patiently beare them, but be aſſured, that they ſhall be turned vnto our good: according to the ſaying of the Apoſtle here; All things worke together for the beſt vnto them, that loue God. Rom.8.28.

When he addeth theſe wordes in the ende of the ſame verſe, (which are called of his purpoſe) as he doth in them further ſhew to whome this promiſe doth appertaine, namely, that all afflictions ſhall worke for their beſt: euen vnto ſuch as are effectually called vnto the knowledge of their ſaluation in Chriſt, according to the good purpoſe and decree of God towards them: So he ſheweth the cauſe, why all afflictions are made profitable vnto them eſpecially, and turned vnto their good in the ende:

which is not any worthines of theirs, that they deserue it at Gods hands, or any right behauing themselues vnder the crosse, as though they were able to worke it out themselues; for of themselues they are as weake, and fraile, and impatient vnder it, as any other: but the free loue of God towards them in Christ, whereby before the beginning of the world, he purposed to do them good, and therfore in time effectually called them. Which purpose of his nothing can alter, but he maketh all things to further it, yea sometimes contrarie to their nature, as afflictions.

So that from the first vnchangeable cause of their saluation, and of all good intented towardes them, he sheweth the certentie of his, that all afflictions shall worke together for the best to those that loue God: for who can hinder or frustrate the determinate purpose of God in any thing?

thing? None in the world, no not the deuill himselfe: and therefore afflictions can not hinder the good that he meaneth to his children, because he hath purposed to doe them good. Which purpose of his for their good hath alway appeared by their fruitfull and effectuall calling. For when he had purposed to saue them by his sonne Iesus Christ, he called them by the ministerie of the Gospel in his good time some sooner some later vnto the knowledge of it; and from the same purpose of his it came to passe, that the word was made effectuall vnto them by the inward operation of his holy Spirit, working in them faith and repentance: and so became vnto thē The power of God vnto their saluation, as the Apostle calleth it: that is, the mightie and effectuall instrument of God to worke their saluation, when it was altogether vnprofitable vnto others, that Rom. 1. 16.

heard it, as well as they.

So then the Lord continuing the ſame purpoſe of his towards them, it ſhall vndoubtedly come to paſſe, that though al other men ſhould not profit by their afflictiõs, but waxe worſe and worſe, as commonly the wicked doe, as we ſee in the example of Pharaoh king of Egypt, who after many grieuous plagues brought vpon him, and vpon the whole land, one after an other, his heart was ſtill more and more hardned, neither would he let the children of Iſrael goe: yet the Lord would turne all this to their good, becauſe he had purpoſed it. And for the certentie and full aſſurance of this, he leadeth them to the conſideration of the purpoſe of God appearing in their calling, which beeing very ſtrange, and many things to the outward appearance againſt it, yet the Lord brake through them all, and none of them could hinder it,

Exod. 9. 35.

or

or ſtay it, becauſe God had purpoſed it.

And truly it is worthie our conſideration, to remember how many things haue beene in the way to hinder the calling of men vnto ſaluation, yet none of them could doe it, becauſe God had purpoſed. As who would euer haue thought, that *Paul* Act.9.1. ſometimes called *Saul*, breathing out threatnings and ſlaughter againſt the Diſciples of the Lord, and hauing now in this great furie and rage of his obtained letters of the high Prieſt to Damaſcus, that if he found any that were of that way or profeſſion, (either men or women) he might bring them bound vnto Ieruſalem: ſhould at this time be ſo ſuddenly conuerted, that he ſhould not onely become a Chriſtian, but an Apoſtle: ſo that it ſhould be truly ſaid of him, he which was a great perſecutor in time paſt, now is a zealous preacher Gal.1.22.

of the faith, which before he deſtroied: but he ſhewes the cauſe of it there himſelfe, when he ſaith, that God had ſeparated him thereunto from his mothers wombe, and ſo called him vnto it of his grace: that is, in his euerlaſting counſell he firſt appointed him to be an Apoſtle, and ſecondarily euen from his birth he did ſeparate him to this office; and thirdly, in time of his meere grace and fauour he called him vnto it, according to his purpoſe.

verſ. 15.

The like may be ſaid of ſome other, as of *Manaſſeh* king of Iudah, who doing euill in the ſight of the Lord like the abominations of the heathē: ſetting vp altars for Baalim, and worſhipping all the hoaſt of heauen, cauſing alſo his ſonnes to paſſe through the fire in the valley of Ben-hinnom: and giuing himſelf to witchcraft and to charming, and vſing them that had familiar ſpirits; there was no likelihoode

2. Chr. 33. 2.

hoode that he ſhould be conuerted vnto God, there were ſo many things againſt it: but the Lord, that had purpoſed to ſhew him mercie, did bring him vnto it againſt all theſe: for he cauſed the King of Aſhur to come a- verſ. 11.
gainſt him, who tooke him priſoner, and put him in fetters, and bound him in chaines, and caried him to Babel; and when he was in tribulation, he praied to the Lord his God, & humbled himſelfe greatly before the God of his fathers; and praied vnto him, and God was intreated of him, and heard his praier: and then he knew that the Lord was God.

But to let theſe paſſe; let euery man conſider the manner of his own calling, & ſee how many things were within him, and without him, that might haue hindred him from comming to that meaſure of grace, that he hath now receiued, that ſo he may acknowledge vpon his owne experience,

ence, that nothing is able to hinder the good purpoſe of God towardes thoſe that loue him. And then he ſhal finde, that the great ignorance, idolatrie, or Atheiſme, in which all his kinred were left might haue ſtaied this good worke, but that God did draw him out of them, as he did A-
Rom.12.1. braham, commanding him to forſake his countrey, and his kinred, and his fathers houſe: or that the manifold great corruptions that were rooted in vs, and confirmed by cuſtome, like vnto the ſeauen deuills that were in Marie Magdalen, might haue kept vs from the hope of it: or the looſe and diſſolute life that we lead, miſpēding our time, and the gifts of God, our wit and ſtrength in riotouſnes and wantonnes, as the prodigall childe did; might haue kept Gods good hand from vs: or that we did deſpiſe and tread vnder our feet the pretious pearle of Gods word, when it was offe-

offered vnto vs, like vnto the prophane beasts, or swine that Christ speaketh of in the Gospel: or that many things elsmight in the iudgement of all men haue beene as a barre to keepe vs from an effectuall calling; but that the Lord in much mercy had purposed it, and so according to the same purpose of his, he bore all things downe before him, and came thorough them vnto vs for our good.

And so we shall be the better perswaded, that the Lord of the same vnchangeable goodnesse of his hauing purposed euen by the crosse, and all manner of affliction to doe vs good, how many things so euer may seeme to our selues, or to others to be against it, that he will verifie this promise vnto vs, and we shall find it to be true, as well as others, that all things shall worke for the best to those that loue God, euen those that are called of his purpose.

In

Rom.8.29. In the next verſe when he addeth; For thoſe whome he knew before, he alſo predeſtinate, to be like to the image of his ſonne, that he might be the firſt borne of many brethren: he declareth an other moſt excellent ende, wherefore the Lord laieth the croſſe moſt of all vpon his children: namely, that thereby they might be like vnto Chriſt their eldeſt brother, as the Lord hath ordained, that all that are his ſhould be, ſome more, & ſome leſſe. And ſo by this meanes eſpecially it worketh our good, when it maketh vs the members conformable and like vnto Chriſt our head. In which words he not onely ſaith, that all afflictions doe befall vs by the very ſpeciall prouidence and hand of God, and not by fortune or chance: but alſo he ſheweth, to what ende he
Luk.24.26 ſendeth them; namely, that as Chriſt himſelf firſt ſuffered, and then entred into glorie: ſo all others going the

ſame

ſame way, that he did, they might be like vnto him; as the Lord hath appointed, that they ſhould be. And therefore we neede not to feare, that the croſſe ſhould hinder vs from our ſaluation, no more then it did Chriſt from glory: but rather that we ought in the midſt of it to haue ſuch hope, that we ſhall be like vnto Chriſt in glorie, becauſe we are like vnto him in the croſſe: according as it is ſaid in an other place, If we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo raigne with him.

Now concerning the former of theſe two points, namely, that no affliction commeth by caſualtie, or befalleth vs by happe hazard, as we ſay, neither that any thing is done by fortune or chance, but by the very ſpeciall appointment of God: he not onely willingly ſuffering it, and beholding it, and vs in it with his own eies, but laying it vpon vs himſelfe, euen with his owne hands, and firſt of all ordai-

ordaining it: this, I ſay, not onely containeth in it moſt notable comfort, and ſingular conſolation, conſidered alone and apart by it ſelfe: but alſo is that, vnto which the whole Scripture of the old & new Teſtament beareth very plentiful witnes. For ſeeing that we beleeue, according to the firſt article of our faith, that God made all things of nothing, therefore alſo we are aſſured, that whatſoeuer are the means knowne or vnknowne, of any thing that befalleth vs, that the Lord himſelfe is the doer of the ſame: for that which they did, they did by his ſpeciall power, ſeeing that of themſelues they were firſt nothing, and therfore without him could not doe any thing.

And thus the Pſalmiſt profeſſeth his faith, in the name of the reſt of the ſeruants of God, acknowledging that the Lord himſelfe hath brought all their troubles vpon thē, which they ſuf-

ſuffered by the violence and crueltie of their aduerſaries; and that he alone did in the ende deliuer them out of their hands: whē he ſpeaketh thus, Praiſe our God, ye people, and make Pſal.66.8. the voice of his praiſe to be heard; which holdeth our ſoules in life, and ſuffereth not our feete to ſlippe. For thou, O God, haſt prooued vs, thou haſt tried vs as ſiluer is tried; thou haſt brought vs into the ſnares, and laid a ſtrait chaine vpon our loines: thou haſt cauſed men to ride ouer our heads: we went into fire and into water, but thou broughteſt vs out into a wealthie place: where they confeſſe that though men did ſo oppreſſe them, as though they ſhould ride ouer them, yet that the Lord cauſed them ſo to doe, and he brought them into the ſnare, and by the crueltie of tyrants laid a ſtrait chaine vpon their loynes, which pinched them: and ſo he did not onely behold their afflictions,

ctions, but by them did of purpose trie them, as men doe siluer.

Whereunto agreeth that most excellent saying of *Iob*, containing the like profession of his faith in this very point; that God bringeth all affliction vpon men, though he vseth men, or any other meanes, or the deuill himselfe, as instruments and meanes to work vnder him in the same thing. Iob.1.11. For whē Satan had desired the Lord to stretch out his hand, and touch *Iob* in his possessions, to see what would become of him then: and thereupon the Lord saide vnto him, Loe all that he hath is in thine hand. then he stirred vp the Shabeans, who came violently and caried away all his oxen, as they were plowing, and his asses as they were feeding: and he caused fire to come downe and burne vp his sheepe and his seruants that kept thē: and he mooued the Chaldeans to set vpon his camels, and to carie them away,

way, and to ſlay his ſeruants: and he raiſed vp a tempeſt of winde, which blewe downe the houſe where his ſonnes and his daughters were, and ſlew them all. And when the tidings of all theſe were brought vnto him on the ſudden, then he fell downe vpon the ground, and worſhipped God, ſaying, Naked came I out of my mothers wombe, and naked ſhall I returne thither: the Lord hath giuen, and the Lord hath taken it: bleſſed be the name of the Lord. Thus though he ſaw the meanes of his vndoing, yet he looked vp to God, and confeſſed him to be the principall doer in this buſines: not aſcribing his loſſes vnto the Chaldeans or Sabeans, but vnto God working by them: and therfore he ſaid, The Lord hath taken away. verſ. 20.

Thus we ought to beleeue and confeſſe, that whatſoeuer doth befall vs either by wicked or vngodly perſons, or by Satan himſelfe, and all his

helliſh power, that the Lord is the doer of the ſame: for the very deuills themſelues were conſtrained to acknowledge vnto Chriſt, when he was vpon the earth, that they could doe nothing without his permiſſion, or rather without his warrant and ſpeciall commaundement: and that not onely vnto men, but euen to the worſt and meaneſt of his creatures. For when he was in the countrey of the Gergaſens, there met him two
Matth.8.28. men poſſeſſed with many deuills; and the deuills ſpeaking in thē, beſought him, ſaying, If thou caſt vs out, ſuffer vs to goe into the heard of ſwine; which was feeding a farre off vpon an hill: ſo they all confeſſe, that they were not able to enter into thoſe very bruit beaſts to hurt them, vntill ſuch time as Chriſt gaue them leaue.
Mark.5.12. But *S. Marke* ſpeaketh of it more ſignificantly, namely, that they ſaid vnto him, Send vs into the ſwine: and then

then as *S. Matthew* ſaith, he did not onely ſuffer them, and giue thē leaue ſo to doe, but bade them goe, and ſo ſent them to them: whereupon they entred into them, and caried them headlong from the hill into the ſea, and ſo choaked them there. So that they confeſſe, that they could doe nothing but by the power of Chriſt, ſending them, ruling them, and reſtraining them at his pleaſure.

Thus alſo it is written of our Lord and Sauiour Chriſt Ieſus, that he was lead aſide of the Spirit of God into the wildernes, to be tempted of the deuill; to ſhew vs, that whatſoeuer did befall him there, the Lord God ſent him thither, and to that end: and that God was not onely contented to ſuffer him to be diuers waies tempted by the ſpace of fourtie daies, and fourtie nights continually; but that he went thither by the immediate direction of the Spirit of God for the Matth. 4. 1.

ſame ende and purpoſe: who could otherwiſe haue preſerued him, that the Deuill ſhould haue had nothing to doe with him. And according to this dealing of God with him, Chriſt hath taught vs all thus to pray, Lord
Luk.11.4. lead vs not into temptation: which kind of wordes, as they be agreeable vnto the words of the Euangeliſts, yea of our Sauiour Chriſt, So they are more full of faith and comfort, then if we ſhould ſay, as many had wont to doe, Suffer vs not to be lead into temptation: becauſe therein we confeſſe, not onely that the Lord beholdeth vs in our troubles, and ſuffereth vs to be lead into them, and ſo is in thoſe things a looker on; but that he, that is our father, and therefore loueth vs; who made vs, and therfore knoweth our ſtrength, laieth them vpon our backes himſelfe, and doth not as it were ſtand by till an other doth it: and therefore we neede ſo much

much the leſſe to feare, leſt we ſhould be ouerladen with them: for as it is ſaid in the Pſalme, as a father hath compaſſion on his children, ſo hath the Lord compaſſion on them that feare him: for he knoweth whereof we be made, he remembreth that we are but duſt. Pſal.103.13.

The conſideration of this ſhould not onely make vs patient in all afflictions, and willingly to beare them, becauſe they come from God, that loueth vs: but alſo to looke for ſome good from them in the ende, becauſe that he, who hath promiſed to worke our good thereby, doth lay them vpon vs himſelfe. And vnleſſe we be thus perſwaded of them, we ſhall be readie to fret, and ſtorme, and impatiently to beare them; much more ſhall we thinke them to be for our hurt, rather then for our good. If *Iob* when he loſt all, if he had looked vnto the violence and robberie of the Chal- Iob 1.15.

deans and Sabeans, who ſpoiled him; or to the malice of the Deuill, who ſet them a worke, and had gone no further, he muſt needes haue had a number of reuenging thoughts againſt them, and he could no waies haue put it vp at their hands; but whē he conſidered of the prouidence of God working by them in wiſdome and mercie, beyond that that fleſh & and blood could conceiue: and was reſolued of this, that the Lord had taken all away: that made him patiently to beare all, and to giue thanks vnto God; and not to vtter one fooliſh word, or to offend with his mouth.

verſus.

And this made *Ioſeph* patiently to put vp thoſe iniuries and wrongs that were offered vnto him by his brethren; when as firſt of all they caſt him into an emptie pit, that there he might periſh: and afterwards they drew him out of it, and ſolde him to the Iſhmaelites, who brought him into

Gen 37.24.

into Egypt. Where afterwardes he beeing aduanced vnto great honour, when in the time of famine his brethren came thither to buie corne, and he at their ſecond comming made himſelfe knowne vnto them; ſaying, Come neere, I pray you to me: I am & 45.4
Ioſeph your brother, whome ye ſold into Egypt: but he ſtaieth not there: for then he might in ſome great heat of affection haue expoſtulated the matter with them, and haue don thē ſome harme, ſeeing he had power in his hands: but he addeth further for their comfort, and to ſhew what ſtaied him: Be not ſad, neither grie- v. 5.
ued with your ſelues, that ye ſold me hither: for God did ſend me before you for your preſeruation: for now two yeares of famine haue been throughout the land, and fiue yeares more behind wherein ſhall be neither earing, nor harueſt: wherfore God ſent me before you, to preſerue your poſteritie

sterite in this land, and to saue you a-liue by a great deliuerance. Now thē you sent me not hither, but God, who hath made me a father vnto Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. Where we see, how he turneth his eyes from his brethren, and looketh vnto God, saying it was not they that sold him, but God that sent him thither, and that for the good of them all: and this made him so patiently to beare it.

And thus the Lord, though he detesteth such sinnes as these in men, yet he often vseth them to his glorie: which when men can wisely consider of, and discerne the one from the other, it will make them quietly to beare great things at the hands of men, because they stay not in them, but cast vp their eyes vnto God: whereas if they should onely looke vnto men, and goe no further, they know

know that they in their doings mean them no good, but hurt: and knowing that they haue deſerued no ſuch meaſure at their hands, they would be like the dogge that bites the ſtaffe wherwith he is beaten, and conſiders not of him that ſtriketh him: therefore in all afflictions, let vs beleeue that we haue to deale with God, ſo ſhall we be patient, and comfortable vnder the ſame. And this is that, no doubt, that ſtaied the old man *Heli* the Prieſt, when he heard that meſſage from the Lord by *Samuel*, which otherwiſe would haue beene a great deale more vncomfortable vnto him, as appeareth by his words, and anſwer, that he gaue vnto him. For whē he told him, that God would iudge his houſe for euer, for the iniquitie which he knew, becauſe his ſonnes ranne into a ſlaunder, and he ſtaied them not; then he anſwered, It is the Lord: let him doe what ſeemeth him good. 1. Sam. 3. 13. 18.

good. This faith, that he knew, that all things ſhould fall out not according to the will of man, but of God, was that, that gaue him hope of a good iſſue of all thoſe troubles in the ende: and ſo it muſt doe to vs.

For this is all one, as if the ſicke patient ſhould haue a Phiſitian to deale with him, who were his father, his brother, or his friend: who ſhould not onely preſcribe the quantitie of all the ingredients for his medicine, knowing well the qualities and working of them; but ſhould alſo make the confection himſelfe, bring it vnto him, and miniſter it with his owne hands: of whoſe fidelitie and care towards him, and deſire of his health, becauſe he doubteth not one whit; that would make him moſt willing to receiue it, though very bitter and vnpleaſant: and though at the firſt he found it in the working ſomewhat churliſh, yet he would hope to receiue

ceiue ſome good by it in the ende; knowing who made it, and brought it vnto him.

And after this manner, and vnder this very compariſon, our Sauiour Chriſt ſpeaketh of his owne afflictions, and did moſt willingly indure the croſſe, which others would haue put off from him, becauſe it was that, that his father did lay vpon him. For when *Iudas* and the reſt came with weapons to take him, *Peter* hauing a ſword drew it out, & laid about him, hoping to haue reſcued him out of their hands: and ſtriking at the head of one of the ſeruants of the high Prieſt, cut off his right eare. Then Ieſus ſaide vnto *Peter*, Put vp thy ſword into the ſheath: ſhall I not drinke of the cuppe, which my father hath giuen me? Wherein he ſheweth not onely what made him ſo patient, and what cauſed him to ſtay Peter, euen the will of his Father: but thereby he doth

Ioh. 18. 3.

11.

doth also teach vs, that whensoeuer any crosse doth befal vs, it is that portion and cuppe, which God our father in great wisdome and mercie hath mingled for vs: and therefore we should not feare any hurt by drinking of it, but rather take it willingly, and hope that it shall work our good, according to his meaning towards vs, and as he hath promised in his word.

If when the child hath offended his father, he should say to one of his seruants in his anger; Take him out of my sight, and punish him so and so: this would be more grieuous and fearefull a great deale vnto an ingenuous child, then if the father should take correction of him himselfe; because he was better perswaded of the goodnes of his father towards him, then of the seruants, and so might looke for more mercie from the one, then from the other. Euen so it may

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miniſter vnto vs no ſmall comfort in all our afflictions, that we beleeue, that in thē we are vnder our fathers hand, and he himſelfe dealeth with vs, and that he hath not in his diſpleaſure deliuered vs to any other to be tormented by them.

Againe, if one that were blinde, offending his father, ſhould be ſuddenly taken away, and caried to ſome puniſhment, he knew not whether, nor by whome, he might iuſtly feare what would be the ende and meaſure of it: but if he knew it were his father, part of his feare would be diminiſhed, and he would be the leſſe vnwilling to goe with him, and more quietly ſubmit himſelfe vnto his correction: So we if at any time through our ignorance and blindnes doe not rightly conceiue of our croſſes, and of the author of them; but as vncertaine we aſcribe them to this, or to that, or to we know not what, we are

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so much the more timerous & feare-full: but if the eyes of our minde by faith in Gods word be so opened, that we see clearely God to be the author of them, and that we are in the hands of none but of our father; our minds are so much the more pacified, and we shall finde a wonderful alteration in our selues, ouer that was in vs before, in respect of the patient bearing of our present estate, whatsoeuer it be.

Or (to shew it in an other comparison) if one should be so hardly dealt withall, as is the manner in the Spanish Inquisition; in which men are examined for their faith in Christ, and religion to God, that the poore soule might be put into the greater feare, and so the sooner abjure his faith; if he should haue a tormentor sent vnto him very ougly disguised, more like a deuill then a man, who should carie him into some dark dungeon

geon he knew not whether, and there lay him vpon the racke: this would no doubt increaſe the griefe of his affliction ſo much the more, becauſe he knew not who did deal with him, and ſo could looke for no mercie at his hands. But now, if when he were in the midſt of his torture he ſhould heare the voice of his father ſpeaking vnto him, though thus diſguiſed, that might ſomewhat vphold him, and ridde him of a number of thoughts that he was troubled with before.

So all afflictions muſt needes be ſo much the more vncomfortable vnto vs, as long as we looke not vp vnto him, that ſendeth it; and are ſo blind, that we conſider not, who ſtriketh vs. Yet when we heare out of the word the voice of our father ſpeaking vnto vs, and telling vs that it is he that dealeth with vs, how ſtraunge and deformed ſo euer the tormentor may ſeeme to be, that is, how grie-

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uous and vnlooked for ſo euer the affliction be, and contrarie to our nature; let vs not be too much diſcouraged, becauſe that then when he ſtriketh vs, he ſtill loueth vs, and the bowels of his compaſſion doe yearne vpon vs, more then in a mother towardes her childe, when ſhee ſeeth what harme is like to come vnto it: and he then ſeeketh thereby to doe vs good.

3. King. 3. 26.

And this is that, which the Prophet Ieremie ſpeaketh of in the perſon of the Lord, ſhewing how he ſtandeth affected towards them whē he doth moſt of all afflict thē. Where firſt of all he bringeth in the Church of the Iewes ſorowing for the greatnes of their affliction, which God had laid vpon them for their ſinnes: and in the ſame committing themſelues wholly to God, and praying to him for his ſaluation; when he ſaith, I haue heard Ephraim lamenting thus,

Ier. 31. 18.

thus, thou haſt corrected me, and I was chaſtiſed as an vntamed calfe; conuert thou me, and I ſhall be conuerted: for thou art the Lord my God: ſurely after I was conuerted, I repented: and after that I was inſtructed, I ſmote vpon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea confounded, becauſe I did beare the reproach of my youth. Then the Lord maketh this anſwer, that he had not caſt them off, though he had ſo afflicted them, but did ſtill loue them, and when he did moſt of all afflict them, then he was mooued with pitie and compaſſion towards thē, ſaying, Is Ephraim my deare ſon, v. 20. or pleaſant child? I ſurely: for ſince I ſpake vnto him, I ſtill remembred him: therefore my bowels are troubled for him, I will ſurely haue compaſſion vpon him, ſaith the Lord.

Thus we ſee, that all afflictions are ordained, and ſent of God, & that for our good, & that he beareth the ſame

fatherly affectiō towards vs in them, that he did before. And therefore that the saluation of the Church, and of euery member of the same is by Gods decree ioyned with bearing the crosse: in so much that we are not to looke to be free from it, vnlesse we will peruert this order established by God himselfe. Neither neede we to feare it, when as the Lord, who hath determined to saue vs, hath appointed this way and meanes also to saue vs by, and to worke our good: and so his decree and purpose of sauing vs can not be seuered from his decree of exercising vs vnder the crosse.

And that none of vs all might looke to be freed from the crosse, or feare, that it should hinder vs in our saluation, or in any gift that might further vs thereunto: the Apostle telleth vs, wherfore the Lord hath thus decreed of the whole Church, to exercise them vnder the crosse; namely, seeing

ſeeing that his owne dearely beloued ſonne, in whome he is well plea- Math.3.17.
ſed, (as it was teſtified from heauen) ſeeing that he came no other way but by the croſſe vnto his great glorie, to be ſet at the right hand of God: he beeing the eldeſt brother in the houſe of God, all other by their practiſe and obedience to the croſſe, might yeild vnto him ſoueraigntie, and acknowledge him to be chiefe, when they will not refuſe to goe that way to their inheritance, which Chriſt went before, the eldeſt and onely naturall ſonne of God, though it ſeeme neuer ſo grieuous, euen thorough many afflictions.

For euen as a noble man wil haue all his ſeruants to weare one liuerie, and all of them to haue the ſame cognizance, that they may be knowne whoſe they are: So the Lord would haue all his ſeruants and children, to be knowne from the reſt of the world

by one and the ſame badge: & though there be ſome other marks of them, whereby they may be diſcerned, as the outward profeſſion of his worſhip and ſeruice, and his holy Sacraments; yet there is one more ſpecial: now the badge that hee put vpon Chriſt Ieſus his eldeſt ſonne, was affliction and trouble in this world: according to that that was propheſied of him, he is deſpiſed, and reiected of men; he is a man full of ſorrowes, and hath experience of infirmities; he was oppreſſed and afflicted, yet did he not open his mouth; he is brought as a ſheepe to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheepe before the ſhearer is dumb, ſo he openeth not his mouth. The lord did break him, & make him ſubiect vnto infirmities: all which we ſee verified in the Goſpel in the whole courſe of his life, but eſpecially in his death. Seeing this was the caſe of the firſt begotten, none of vs the

Eſa. 53. 3.
7.
10.

the younger brethren muſt refuſe it, or be wearie of it.

We ſee by experience, that in euery family great is the prerogatiue and priuiledge of the eldeſt brother aboue all the reſt, he by the law of God was by his double portion preferred aboue all the reſt: and Iacob in bleſſing all his children, called Reuben his eldeſt ſonne, The excellencie of dignitie, and the excellencie of power, and ſo did ſhew what belonged vnto him as he was the eldeſt, if he had not loſt it, namely, that he ſhould haue beene the chiefeſt of all his brethren. None therefore muſt looke to goe beyond the eldeſt, nay all can not be like vnto him: and if any of the younger might come to as great an inheritance as he, by doing the ſame things that he did before them, though neuer ſo hard, and by going to it the ſame way, that he did, though full of many difficulties and Gen. 49. 3.

daungers; they might not with any colour refuse the conditions, vnlesse they would preposterously and without reason preferre themselues before him, and thinke themselues better then he.

In like manner seeing it hath pleased the Lord, as the Apostle saith, to consecrate the price of our saluation through afflictions, and he came vnto glorie no other way then this; we must thinke it good for vs to goe the same way, that we might be like vnto him, and so by our practise shew, that we acknowledge him to be the prince of our saluation, and our eldest brother. Therefore as he is the most chief and principall in the commonwealth, or in the Church, or in a priuate family, or in any place els, whome all the rest desire to be like vnto: So when we are contented to be like vnto Christ in any thing, euen in the crosse, then shall we declare

Heb. 2. 10.

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indeede that wee hold him not in word onely, but in true faith & heartie affection to be chiefe and principall aboue all others, and as was ſaid before, to be the Prince of our ſaluation; or as it is ſaide in this text that we haue in hand, The firſt begotten among many brethren. Rom. 8. 29.

For indeede howſoeuer there is great difference betweene the head and the reſt of the members, and all of them are farre inferiour vnto it: yet there is and muſt be a certaine conformitie betweene the one and the other; that is, a certain likelihood and agreement betweene the members of the ſame bodie and the head: So howſoeuer there is no compariſon betweene Chriſt and vs, yet we muſt thus farre agree with him, that we muſt not thinke to be aboue him, and therefore we muſt not refuſe any condition, that he hath vndergon before: vnleſſe we would moſt diſor-

derly preferre our ſelues the members, before him our head: which thing to doe, were to darken the glorie of him that is the firſt borne, and to ſtaine the honour of him that is truly called, The Prince of our ſaluation.

For what a confuſion were it in the commonwealth, if the Nobles, yea the meaneſt of the ſubiects would refuſe to doe that, which the King & Prince had done before? or what diſorder wold there be in a family, if the yonger brethren ſhould think much and diſdaine to be brought vp that way, that the heire of the houſe had beene before: Euen ſo when we ſhall refuſe to beare the croſſe, which our Lord and Sauiour Chriſt Ieſus by the appointment of his father hath born in greater meaſure, then we ſhall or can: it is nothing els but pride and ſelfe loue to lift vp our ſelues aboue him, and to ſay by our deedes, that we will

will not in this thing be conformable vnto him, as to our Prince or eldeſt brother.

And then conſider I pray you, what an intolerable thing this were, that we beeing worſe then duſt and aſhes, and wormes meat, yea nothing els but a lumpe of ſinne, ſhould deſire to be ſpared aboue the onely ſonne of God, whome he hath made heire of all things; by whome alſo he made the worlds; who is the brightnes of the glorie, and the ingrauen forme of his perſon, bearing vp all things by his mightie power: and is made ſo much the more excellent then the Angels, in as much as he hath obtained a more excellent name thē they: for of him he ſaith, Thou art my ſon, this day haue I begotten thee: and of the other, Let all the Angels of God worſhip him, as the Apoſtle doth moſt excellently ſhew at large in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes. Therefore Heb. 1. 2.

let

let vs not so loue our selues that the estate of Christ Iesus should seeme vnmeete for vs: as if he beeing thorough all afflictions and temptations brought vnto glory, we should dream of a more easie way for our selues, and thinke to come to it after a more peaceable & quiet manner, we know not what.

But rather let this comfort and vphold vs in all trouble and aduersitie, that we can neuer be prefſed downe so low with it, but that Christ Iesus our Lord and Prince hath been more deepely plunged in it before: & therfore the more that we suffer, the more like we are vnto him. In so much that if it were possible for vs to haue the afflictions of *Iob* doubled vpon vs, yea if we could goe downe into hell, and so suffer all the torments of a damned and desperate creature both in soule and bodie; hauing the worme of our conscience knawing in vs continually;

ly; euen in them we ſhould be moſt like vnto Chriſt in his fearefull agonies, and deadly ſorrow that he fell into, complaining that his ſoule was heauie euen vnto the death: and in his bloodie ſweat, by which all the parts of this bodie were ſtrained to the full: yea in the lamentable outcries that he made vpon the croſſe, when as he finding no comfort in heauen nor in earth for a while he cried with a loud voice, My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me, and ſo gaue vp the ghoſt. Math 26. 38. & 27. 46.

But if all this doe not ſuffice vs, and we further demaund, why the Lord ſhould appoint ſo hard a way for vs vnto ſaluation, and why he ſhould ordaine the gate to be ſo ſtrait, and the way ſo narrow, whereby we ſhould enter into life: and ſo ſhould fooliſhly wiſh, as many doe, that he had appointed ſome eaſier way then this. & 7. 14.

Firſt of all I muſt ſay, as the Apoſtle doth,

Rom.9.20. doth, O man, who art thou, which pleadest against God? shall the thing formed say to him that formed it; why hast thou appointed me to doe so and so? we must not prescribe any thing vnto the Lord in the course and manner of our saluation: no more then children must prescribe vnto their parēts after what maner they should come to their inheritances and portions. But seeing that the ioyes of the kingdome of heauen are so great, e-

1 Cor. 2.9. uen such, as the eye hath not seene, nor the eare hath heard, neither haue they entred into the heart of man; and that we are altogether so vnworthie of thē, we must thinke our selues happie, if we come to inioy them any way at the last, be it neuer so hard; yea, if we should goe to heauen thorough the midst of hell.

For when we are come thither, in the presence of God is the fulnes of

Psal.16.11. ioy, & at his right hand are pleasures for

for euermore, we ſhall finde them ſo farr to exceed all that euer we heard, read, or thought of them: ſo that we ſhall ſay of them, as the Queene of Sheba ſaide of the wiſdome and honour of king Salomon, when ſhe ſaw it: It was a true word, which I heard 2.Chr.9.5. in mine owne land of thy acts, and of thy wiſdome: howbeit I beleeued not their report, vntill I came, and mine eyes had ſeene it: and behold not the one halfe of thy great wiſdome was told me: for thou exceedeſt the fame that I heard: happie are thy men, and happie are theſe thy ſeruants, which ſtand before thee alway, &c. So we ſhall finde all things there to ſurpaſſe all that euer we heard, & ſo ſhal count our ſelues and other happie & thriſe happy, that may ſtand in the preſence of God for euer.

At what time we ſhall finde the happines of that life in many degrees to ſurmount all the troubles and aduerſities

uersities that we haue suffered in this life, to surmount them I say both in greatnes, and in continuance without any interruption. As the Apostle saith, who had so great experience of all kind of afflictions, that he saith of
2.Cor.4.8. himselfe, We are afflicted on euery side; and euery where we beare about in our bodie the dying of the Lord Iesus: for we are alwaies deliuered vnto death for Iesus sake: yet he saith, he did not faint vnder them: for when he considered of the ioyes of heauen, and compared the afflictions of this world with them, he accounted the afflictions to be but short, euen for a moment of time, and very light and easie, in respect of the eternall glorie, and the great waight of it, that was prepared for him, and for others:
17. when he saith, for our light affliction, which is but for a moment causeth vnto vs a farre more excellent and eternall waight of glorie: and as he

deli-

deliuereth it in an other place more plainly & confidently in these words: I count, or all things being well considered, I gather, that the afflictions of this present time are not worthie of the glorie which shall be shewed vnto vs. Rom. 8. 18.

And then we shall neuer repent vs of the hardnes of the way, by which we came through manifold afflictions vnto so great and eternall glorie; no more then the sicke patient is sorie that by induring so many hard things vnder the physitians hands, he attained vnto perfect health at the last. But rather as it was a great comfort vnto Ioseph, to see what great honour he was come vnto in Egypt, so that he was made lord of all the countrey, though he had suffered many hard things before: according to that, that is said in the Psalme, Ioseph was sold for a slaue; they held his feet in the stockes, & he was laid in irons, Gen. 45. 5. Psal. 105. 17. 18.

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vntill his appointed time came, and the counsell of the Lord had tried him. Then the King sent, and loosed him, euen the ruler of the people deliuered him: he made him Lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance. So it shall be a comfort vnto vs for euer and euer, that by walking in the straite way of godlines, and induring many grieuous things in the same, we are come to that place where we are made Kings & Queenes to raigne with Christ in glorie world without ende.

And as Iacob was not sorie, that he came to inherite his fathers blessing at the last by induring a long exile frō his fathers house by the space of twentie yeares, and a tedious kind of seruice vnder his cruell master *Laban*, who did often change his wages, and caused him to be pinched with the frost in the night, and to be scorched with the heate of the sunne in the

the day. So it ſhall be no griefe of heart at all vnto vs then, that by patience vnder many croſſes here, we are come to inherit the bleſſing of our heauenly father in the kingdome of heauen, which was prepared for vs before the foundation of the world. But as the Iſraelites when they were quietly poſſeſſed of the land of Canaan, that good land that flowed with milke and honie, for ioy thereof neuer remembred their long iorney trauailing by the ſpace of fourtie yeares through a vaſt deſart and forlorne wildernes, in which ſometimes they wanted water, ſometimes food, ſometimes were in daunger of their enemies, ſometimes were ſtu[illegible]th fierie ſerpents, and ſometim[illegible]re put in great feare of o[illegible]calamities: So wee when wee are come to that land of promiſe, wh[illegible]eof this was but a type and figure; where is the tree of life indeed, bearing fruit con- Reuel. 22.

tinually, whoſe fruit are for meat, and whoſe leaues are for medicine: where ſhall be no more curſe, but the throne of God, and of the lambe ſhall be in it, where his ſeruants ſhall ſerue him, and they ſhall ſee his face, and his name ſhall be in their foreheads: and there ſhall be no night there, & they ſhall neede no candle, neither light of the ſunne: for the Lord God ſhall giue them light, and they ſhall raigne for euermore. Then all things that we haue ſuffered in theſe daies of our pilgrimage ſhall be cleane forgotten, and remembred no more.

To conclude, as *Dauid* did not repent him, that he came to the kingdom of Iſrael at the ende of many yeare in which he ſuffered ſo many hard things vnder the tyrannie of *Saul*, as he did; when as ſometimes he would haue ſmit him through with his ſpeare vnto the wall, and at an other time he would haue ſlain him in

1. Sam. 18. 11.

his

his bed: and continually he hunted after his life, as one would hunt a partridge in the wildernes: So we ſhall not repent vs, that we are come to the kingdome of heauen after many yeares, in which ſometimes we haue beene purſued of one affliction, and ſometimes of an other: ſo that all our life long hath beene nothing els but a continuall warrefare with our own corruptions, and with the temptations of the world, and of the deuill. Therefore to vphold our ſelues in a good courſe, and that in all trialls we might poſſeſſe our ſoules in patience vnto the ende, we muſt conſider and ſeriouſly meditate vpon the happines of the life to come: which ſhall ſo ſweeten the bitterneſſe of all afflictions, that either we ſhall not feele it in compariſon, or it ſhal ſeeme nothing vnto vs: and ſo let vs put that exhortation of the Apoſtle in practiſe, Let vs not be wearie of well doing, for in due & 26.20 Gal.6.9.

due season we shall reape, if we faint not.

Where to perswade the Galatians and vs to go on cõstantly in all good courses vnto the end, he makes a promise of great reward which God will bestow vpon all them that shall so doe, not so much in this life, as the life to come, when euery man shal re-
2. Cor. 5. 10. ceiue the things that are done in his bodie, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or euill: and this he doth by a familiar and plaine comparison; That as the husbandman though the seede-time be very painefull and costly vnto him; so that both he buies his corne at a great price, and hath many an hard iourney at the plow, and meetes with many a boisterous storme, yet he giues not ouer in the midst, but comforts himselfe with the hope of harueſt, which in due time will come, though long after: and is perswaded, that that will fully

fully quite all his coſt, and recõpence all his labour to the full: and when he hath gathered his corne into his barne, he repents himſelfe not one whit of his coſt, or trauell, but rather is glad that by neither of them he was diſcouraged from following of that good courſe, which now he ſeeeth to be ſo gainfull vnto himſelfe.

So we in all afflictions and in all difficulties continuing in well doing, muſt comfort ourſelues with the hope of that reward that God hath promiſed in the kingdom of heauen: according to that, that is ſaid in the Pſalme, they that ſow in teares, ſhall reape in ioy; they went out weeping, and caried pretious ſeede, but they ſhal returne with ioy, and bring their ſheaues. Where the time of affliction is compared vnto a ſeede-time in a deare yeare, when poore men becauſe of the ſcarſitie and price of corne ſow it with teares: but the re- Pſal. 126. 5.

ward in heauen is likened vnto the harueſt, when the increaſe is ſo great, that they reape & carie in their corne with great ioy. This is that then, which we muſt ſet before our eyes, that we might patiently vndergo the hardnes of affliction, it beeing the readie way to bring vs to glorie.

And this *Paul* applieth vnto ſeruants, whoſe condition of life, eſpecially of bondſeruants, and vnder heathen and vnchriſtian maſters in thoſe daies was very hard: and willeth thē to doe their duties conſcionably, as ſeruing the Lord, knowing that of him, they ſhall receiue their reward 3. when he ſaith, Seruants be obedient vnto them that are your maſters according to the fleſh, in all things, not with eye ſeruice, as men pleaſers, but in ſinglenes of heart, pleaſing God: whatſoeuer ye doe, doe it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that of the Lord ye ſhall receiue the

the reward of the inheritance: for ye ſerue the Lord Chriſt. Thus he would haue them to go on in their callings chearfully, though they were very baſe and painfull, in hope of that inheritance that was prepared for thē in the kingdome of heauen. And truly if not onely ſeruants, but all other men did beleeue that in all things they had to deale with God, and that he would reward them if they did well, though all other ſhould neglect them, the hope of that might comfort them in all difficulties.

And this made Moſes the man of God to refuſe all the riches and pleaſures, that he might haue inioyed in Egypt, as beeing the reputed ſonne of Pharaohs daughter, and to choose rather to ioyne himſelfe with the people of God though in great affliction, becauſe he had reſpect vnto the recompence of the reward. Which reward could not then be ſeene, and *Heb.* 11

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therefore the Apostle saith, that he did it by faith: and truly if we did beleeue that great reward that is laid vp in heauen for them that serue God, and is offered vnto vs in his word, if all the pleasures of the world were laid before vs on the one hand, and all the afflictions of the same on the other hand, we should be of Moses his minde; to choose rather to suffer aduersitie with the people of God, then to indure the pleasures of sinne for a season: esteeming the rebuke of Christ greater riches, then all the treasures of the world, because by faith we haue respect vnto the recõpence of that reward.

And so I may conclude with that most excellent exhortation of the Apostle in the chapter following:

chap. 22.1 Wherefore let vs also, seeing that we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, cast away euery thing that presseth downe, and the sinne

sinne that hangeth so fast on: let vs runne with patience the race, that is set before vs, looking vnto Iesus the author and finisher of our faith: who for the ioy that was set before him, indured the crosse, and despised the shame, and is sat at the right hand of the throne of God. where he sits before our eyes the example of our Sauiour Christ, who in those grieuous agonies he was in, to sweeten the bitternes of his crosse, did earnestly consider of the ioy and glorie which a little after he was to enter into: that we might also in our sufferings hold our thoughts seriously vnto the meditation of the ioyes of heauen, and for them indure them, and treade vnder our feete for them all the shame, reproach, and contempt of the world, that shall be cast vpon vs.

Where also that we might not faint under the burden, we are to consider

fider of the circumſtance of time, when we ſhall reape the fruit of our
Gal. 6.9 labours, that is, In due ſeaſon, if we faint not. Which is partly in this life,
2. Tim. 4.8. for godlineſſe hath the promiſes of this life, as well as of the life to come: and the Lord as he doth in this life giue to his children the firſt fruits of his Spirit: ſo he doth giue them the firſt fruits of their labours, as a taſt of their happines, which they ſhall enioy more fully hereafter: and there-
Mark 10.30 fore Chriſt ſaith in the Goſpel, that he will reward thoſe that are his an hundred fold in this life. But this due time is meant principally of the life to come, when they ſhall receiue their reward fully: not onely in the houre of death, when the ſoule entreth into happines, as it is ſaide of Lazarus, that when he died, the An-
uk. 16.22. gels caried his ſoule into Abrahams boſome: but eſpecially at the day of iudgement, when ſoule and bodie beeing

beeing ioyned together, they shall be in full possession of eternal glorie and felicitie for euer.

And seeing the Lord hath of his wisdome and goodnes set downe the time, when we shall be comforted and receiue our reward; we must in faith and patience waite vpon him for it. And as the husbandman that hath sowne his field, doth not looke for his croppe the next day, or the next weeke, but tarieth till the harueſt come: so must we sow the seede of obedience vnto God, euen vnder the crosse, though with teares, and looke for the fruit of it at the great day of harueſt, when we shall reape it with ioy, euē with that ioy that is vnspeakable and most glorious: when he shal separate the sheepe from the goates, and giue them their reward, saying, Come ye blessed of my father, take the inheritance of the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation Math.

of

of the world.

And seeing the Lord hath beene patient in waiting for our amendement from day to day: let us patiently expect the accomplishment of this his gratious promise from day to day, and from yeare to yeare. Setting before our eyes the example of the dumb creatures, which expect with a fervent desire to be delivered from that bondage and corruption, that now they are in, into the glorious libertie of the sonnes of God: and this they doe with stretching forth their heads, as the Apostle saith, like vnto the poore prisoner, that is condemned, and puts out his head at the prison window, looking for the gratious pardon of the Prince. And if we can thus doe, as we shall not be frustrate of our hope, so it shall marueilously vphold vs, as an anker fixed in heauen, and not in earth, in all the waues and tempests of this troublesome

world

world, till we arriue happily at the hauen of heauen, we shall find the ioyes so to exceede all the miseries that we have indured here, that we shall not be grieued one whit, that we are come to such a place of rest, by so long and tedious a iourney: Which grace God graunt vnto vs, for his sonne Iesus Christs sake. *Amen.*

FINIS.